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PRIZE STORIES
OF 1929

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O. HENRY
MEMORIAL AWARD
PRIZE STORIES
OF 1929

O. HENRY

Memorial Award

PRIZE STORIES OF 1929

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS

AUTHOR OF "A HANDBOOK ON STORY WRITING"
"OUR SHORT STORY WRITERS," ETC.
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GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK
1929

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FIRST EDITION

THIS VOLUME

IS DEDICATED TO

THETA SIGMA PHI

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF
WOMEN IN JOURNALISM

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank judges, authors, editors, and agents with whose friendly coöperation this volume of O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories was prepared, without whose coöperation the series would cease to exist. I am peculiarly grateful to the large number of publishers who have sent free copies of magazines in recognition of the service involved. Perhaps my greatest debt is to the readers, whose labors have lightened effectively my own task: Harry Anable Kniffin, story writer; Eunice Hopkins Craddock, formerly on the staff of *Vogue;* and Isabel Walker, instructor in English, Hunter College,

B. C. W.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction. By Blanche Colton Williams . . .	ix
Big Blonde. By Dorothy Parker	1
The Homesick Ladies. By Sidney Howard . . .	27
Him and Her. By Katharine Brush	53
Alice. By Sherwood Anderson	63
The King of the Cats. By Stephen Vincent Benét	73
The Apothecary. By Louis Bromfield	91
Speakeasy. By Katharine Brush	121
Treat You Clever. By Maristan Chapman . . .	143
Elephants Through the Country. By Mary Johnston	163
Manicure. By Margaret Leech	187
Two Red-haired Women. By Don Marquis . . .	203
Sinners. By Kathleen Norris	231
Buttin' Blood. By Pernet Patterson	251
A Coffin for Anna. By Elise M. Rushfeldt . . .	271
Professional Pride. By Ruth Burr Sanborn . .	285
Mrs. Sabin. By Caroline Slade	307
The Silver Sword. By Wilbur Daniel Steele . .	321
Appendix	341

INTRODUCTION

TITLES of more than two thousand stories, by American authors, in American magazines, were filed for the period from September, 1928, to July, 1929, inclusive. Ratings by readers and editor placed approximately one hundred and twenty stories in the first list, from which forty-odd were selected for further consideration by the judges: John Angus Burrell, Assistant Professor of English, Columbia University; Sylvia Chatfield Bates, author, staff member of the Department of Journalism, New York University; Frances Gilchrist Wood, Litt. D., and Blanche Colton Williams, chairman and editor, Head of the Department of English, Hunter College of the City of New York. The twenty-seven stories rated highest by the first judge were submitted to the others, and the votes were combined as usual (see introductions to former volumes) with the following results:

The first prize, $500, for the best short story, is awarded to "Big Blonde," by Dorothy Parker, first published in the *Bookman*, February, 1929. This story leads with a rating of 3.25 points, the number nearest 1.

The second prize, $250, for the second best story, is awarded to "The Homesick Ladies," by Sidney Howard, first published in *Scribner's*, April, 1929.*

The third prize, $100, for the best short short story, is awarded to "Him and Her," by Katharine Brush, first published in *Collier's*, March 16, 1929. This award was made by Professor Burrell and Miss Shirley V. Long, instructor in story writing, Hunter College, both of whom chose it from half a dozen short short stories submitted by the editor.

*The second prize would have fallen to "Oak," by Wilson Follett, *Century*, January, 1929, but Mr. Follett could not be heard from, and no story not reprinted in the collection may receive a prize. "Oak" ranks one fourth of a point higher than "The Homesick Ladies."

The runner-up in Professor Burrell's opinion is "Tommy's Wife," by Corey Ford, *Scribner's*, January, 1929; in Miss Long's judgment it is "Sasha Chooses a Gift," by Hallie Flanagan, *Forum*, June, 1929.

Dorothy Parker, widely known for her witty verse and mordant prose, never has worked to better purpose than in creating "Big Blonde." Vital from page to page, vital in retrospect, and undiminished by any trick of perspective, Big Blonde lives, a creature who may not be sad even vicariously, but who must laugh and, the outlet of every emotion denied, "be a sport" that she may fulfill her tragic destiny. The end would have pleased Thomas Hardy, who once wrote: "A tragedy exhibits a state of things in the life of an individual which unavoidably causes some natural aim or desire of his to end in a catastrophe when carried out." By the conventional concept, Big Blonde's story ends in sardonic humor and tragi-comedy. Is she not still alive? Did she not fail of her suicidal intention? Ay, there's the rub. She must continue, like the Wandering Jew, forever. After Art goes, as Herb, Eddie, Charley, and their long line of successors went, there will be another and another, for whom she must laugh, in whose presence she may never weep. Yet the tragedy lies in Big Blonde's character, hers through heritage, encouraged by circumstance, and fixed by her own course. Professor Burrell, who placed this story first, says it is the one that interested him most. "Here, I feel, is the miracle achieved; there was life, and here is art. I know these are high-sounding words; but they must have some meaning, and, when one can point to a specific example, these words mean more than they do when one treats them as abstractions." Miss Bates was stirred by Big Blonde's failure to die. "The horrible effort of her life," says this judge, "has been superbly conveyed by Mrs. Parker. . . . Art is here in good measure, and I have given the story second place."

"The Homesick Ladies," by Sidney Howard, whose *They Knew What They Wanted* won the Pulitzer play prize in 1925, tells with dramatic boldness a delicate tale of telepathic implications. The author set himself a difficult task. It is one thing to be a homesick lady on the *Berengaria* and to project one's self through memory and imagination into the immedi-

ate future scene, which is the scene also of one's childhood; such projection forms easily enough an individuality, half little girl, half woman, whose experience is half past, half present. It is quite another thing, however, to seize upon these projections as objective material and to make them alike perceptible to a number of people on the scene. The transition from one mind to the others requires skill in handling the most necessary but most difficult of all the narrator's tools, that of suggestion. Yet the author has effected this transition, and if he does so in a manner not wholly convincing (one judge does not, even while reading, "believe the outcome"), yet he does so both harmoniously and provocatively. His thesis lurks in the carefully unobtrusive lines, "Thought does not need much quality to be no more than thought. Like life, thought may exist with equal right, both as great gods and as filmy and impalpable little fishes in the stream of perpetual consciousness." Professor Burrell, recalling Mr. Howard's success in play-making, writes, "The technique of the theater is clearly apparent in this story: sharply realized people; great economy in dialogue; every word of which counts." He thinks the ending not too clear and, for him, the story fell off; but the end left him wondering with "a kind of delight in this very wondering." (Surely no more hauntingly lovely final paragraph has been written this year for any short story). Mrs. Wood, who places the story first, says tersely that it has the charm and subtlety of Henry James. "The characters are sculptured with a finish and beauty rarely found in the short story. . . . 'The Homesick Ladies' is a wonder."

Katharine Brush, whose just published *Night Club* recalls that the title story was reprinted in the 1927 volume of this series, excells in dramatic economy and the modern scenes of metropolitan life. "Him and Her" presents in some three thousand words with the precision of the engraver's burin the entire lives of two human beings, summing them up in a half hour by the hostess chambermaid. The admirable quality of Miss Brush's economy lies in its depth; beneath the easy flow of her dialogue, like the flow of everyday existence, moves the deeper current of life. This dialogue, incidentally, gives perfectly the desired effect of conversation *over*heard. "'Him and Her,' says Professor Burrell, "deserves high praise if for

no other reason than the masterly handling of the angle of narration. Yet what interested me more than this is the way, the very sharp way, in which the characters all take on the unmistakable semblance of reality. Then there is a beautiful simplicity and understatement, and the drama comes leaping out at one." Miss Long comments on the skill by which the author compels sympathy for both man and woman.

"Alice," published in *Harper's Bazar* under the title "Beauty," bears the imprimatur of Sherwood Anderson for the universality of the idea and its unique adoption into the short story. The importance of this idea is emphasized through a series of illustrations like three peaks, the first two of which are subdued to the rare moment experienced by the beholder of Alice. The capture of these moments of true beauty, that of the inner eye approved by a Wordsworth or a Hardy, must disregard the outer sign too often mistaken for the thing itself. A girl carrying wood, a woman of sixty whose stockings have fallen down over her shoes—these do not portend the flitting of wings evanescent as the moment, enduring as the memory of the beholder or the eternity, even, of which the moment is a part. The expression of this fleeting, transient quality of supernal beauty, not Wordsworth's nor Hardy's, is Anderson's. To hint at the expression is all a writer can do, and to catch that hint is all a reader need do to share the author's idea, the absolute idea in the Platonic sense.

"The King of the Cats," by the distinguished author of "John Brown's Body," must have been written in a state of high hilarity. Besides creating the wer-cat story, unique, for all the cat-women and werwolves who have worn through the ages, Mr. Benét playfully toys with a machine gun of satire. One shell strikes the ladies who fight over celebrities; another hits the Nobel Prize; another, young men in the bond business; still another from this delusively irresponsible Yale man knocks out the Princetonian. The man-cat's the thing, however. Watch him curl up on the couch, see the glint in his green eyes; hear his smooth-padding feet and his spitting foreign tongue. Black plush under his socks and a tail that wields a baton—these are more than clues; they are evidence. The princess, more daintily indicated as a feline mate, is perhaps more convincing because more suggestively drawn. The end of the story the reader may choose with the same gay

excess of spirits that inspired this fairy tale. Miss Bates approves the sprightly fantasy of "The King of the Cats," and Professor Burrell comments on the impossible situation which the author by his peculiar power makes us willing to believe as we read.

"The Skeleton at the Feast," by the winner of the short short story prize for 1927, appears in the author's first collection, "Awake and Rehearse!" as "The Apothecary." "By either title," remarks Professor Burrell, "it's an excellent story. It has all the qualities we ask for: character, plot, and all the rest. But I found it powerful and depressing. There's iron here, rather than steel. By this I mean I felt How cruel! rather than How poignant!" Life was cruel for Daisy, much as for Big Blonde, whose character hers resembles; but Daisy's greater intelligence might have directed her life otherwise and averted her fate which, therefore, has more of the features of Nemesis than the fate which led and trailed Big Blonde. The stench of death, proper atmosphere of decayed social members, not so much alleviated as emphasized by the redolence of youth, is the soul of the story; like the moonshine in Hawthorne's "White Old Maid" this intangible quality persists even after the material figures have faded. A successfully unpleasant tale—gruesome and macabre—"The Skeleton" is worthy of companioning "The Life and Death of Vergie Winters."*

"Speakeasy" is an instance of the immemorially old double-life tragedy and a version of another tragedy quite as old; it is as modern as the latest cocktail and the newest street walker. The dramatic power, observed of "Him and Her" is equally strong here. The scenes in the two apartments, so divergent, are harmonized through the dual personality of Jenny who—thanks to the author's skill—fills the stage competently, even when alone. Here is another of the sisterhood of Big Blonde and Daisy, one whose doom appears at first more tragic than theirs because the reversal of fortune is sharper, but whose curse is transformed into blessing: "She could not bribe him back . . . she knew at last that . . . she could be glad, she could say to herself, 'Well done.'" In that final paragraph, one of the best three endings in this collection,

*Reprinted in Volume IX of this series (1927) as "The Scarlet Woman."

if best be determined by emotion aroused, is balm for Jenny's woe. Katharine Brush is the second author represented by two stories in one volume of this series. The other was Wilbur Daniel Steele (1925).

Maristan Chapman, author of *Happy Mountain*, in "Treat You Clever" brings again from Glen Hazard old friends and dialect in the noblest usage of dialect. That is, she tacitly assumes worthiness, beauty, and equality for the obsolete and provincial by weaving them into the fabric of the national and present. A student of the English written by King Alfred more than a thousand years ago rejoices to see "sib," "word-hoard," "ansund," and many of their kin, all the old meanings intact, preserved in America by a civilization rooted in old England, less subject to change than modern England. If for some readers not Anglo-Saxon the dialect leaps out too surprisingly, so calling attention to itself, there is the fun of Rashe's and Wait-still's fooling, which no diction can conceal or repress. Their playful treatment of Parker is no trumped-up scheme to satisfy the demands of plot, but grows out of character provoked by the outlander. The rhythmic prose of this tale recalls John Ridd, who was not gifted with long words save what he had won from the Bible or Master William Shakespeare, and his tale of Exmoor. Mrs. Wood's enthusiasm led her to place "Treat You Clever" second, and the editor ranks it high.

To "Elephants Through the Country," by the eminent author of *Prisoners of Hope*, *To Have and to Hold*, *Audrey* and a long line of succeeding novels, must be paid the tribute admiration owes to genius. That it is consummately written is clear. "That it is a study of phantom fear," says Professor Burrell, "interested me very much. But the 'study of fear' did not for a moment usurp the stage to the detriment of the people who were involved in this human situation." Miss Bates finds the piling up of emotional effect in the hero's dread like the ponderous footsteps of Shiva the great elephant himself, coming over the mountains. She sees the story depending for its significance, however, on the acceptance of certain esoteric principles not accepted by the whole world. The editor sees the story an example of fate, casting its shadow long before the inevitable event. Though family, doctor, lawyer, clergyman, and the man's will are

ordered against this fate they are powerless. Norman, like the ancient Greek hero, by his very attempt to placate destiny, only insures its fulfillment. With an unerring sense of finish Miss Johnston stops short, rolling down the curtain with the swiftness of Norman's hundred-foot descent into the ravine.

From these excursions into the mountains of the South we return to the New York stratum of "Big Blonde" and "Speakeasy." Margaret Leech, author of *Tin Wedding*, has carved a cameo in "Manicure." Commenting on its fine structural technique, Miss Bates writes, "Its unity is perfect. The focusing of a long, complicated story down to an hour in a manicure parlor is a feat to be proud of. The characters glitter, they are so clear." To which Professor Burrell adds, "If Virginia Woolf ever wrote about the common people and their trials and joys, she might have written this story." Though it may lack large importance, "Manicure" is so perfectly dramatized as to leave the reader with the impression that he has seen it played and that he will not forget the climaxes, surely not that erected through Nina's final speech. Both Miss Bates and the editor assigned third place to this triumph in miniature.

Don Marquis's "Two Red-haired Women" brings back O'Meara, whose tale of the *Mayflower* and Mrs. MacLirr was reprinted in Volume X of this series. O'Meara is in fine imaginative vein and full of satire for diplomacy. He achieves his humorous climaxes through shrewd understanding of the two famous Quanes, "both of thim kind o' foxy," and by playing them against each other. If a more daringly funny scene has been written in the year than that from which O'Meara's ancestor emerges with his red hair showing the first streaks of gray, we haven't read it, and we'd like to read it. Even Professor Burrell, who never could find Mr. Dooley's witticisms cause for laughter, read with fascination "Two Red-haired Women." He finds a sureness of touch in the characterization, a discovery which underscores the author's success in exaggeration. It is pleasant to find this polygraphic writer turning more frequently to fiction and to record the titles of stories he has published this year.

"Sinners" seems to the chairman the best short story Kathleen Norris has published in the later years, which she has devoted chiefly to longer works. It reflects the tenderness

and sympathy that make her the novelist most beloved by thousands and reveal her a poet according to Sir Philip Sidney's famous definition: ". . . and with a tale forsooth he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play and old men from the chimney corner." The simple characters, their dialect, and the rustic setting are calculated, doubtless through conscious art, to subdue the melodramatic possibilities of the plot—possibilities nowhere permitted to dominate—that unfolds from a girl's mad moment of lying away a man's freedom. The telling begins at the right point, after long years have rolled away from that moment, and it ends with the delicate yet clear suggestion that the wronged man lies for the woman's freedom from her unbearable sense of sin. Perhaps the final paragraph of twenty words is the most meaningful in this collection.

To read Pernet Patterson's "Buttin' Blood" is to take a vacation in the land of memory. Every Southern country boy or girl has enjoyed the odyssey of carrying cotton to Jackson, sugar cane to the Louisiana mill, or 'bacca down to Richmond. Luther and Nubbin, companioned by Spot, are perfectly contrasted by one who knows. The story, too, is adequate; the not insignificant struggle of two small boys to deliver tobacco has for climax the feat of Nubbin's buttin', a climax approached almost from the beginning. And the implications of the battered old harmonica hint far in advance just what Nubbin would esteem a perfect present or reward for valor. The editor wishes to record that the version of "Buttin' Blood" here used was prepared by Mr. Patterson himself.

"A Coffin for Anna" testifies for a young author, as its publication in a local magazine (which surprised and delighted the editor by the amount of fresh material it contained) also witnesses. The rather loose but easy gait, taking climaxes as if unaware, carries the reader thoughtfully and observingly along, relieved not to have this peak and that displayed by a knowing driver. It is as if Miss Rushfeldt were unaware of the drama growing logically out of the ignorant, ne'er-do-well Kettlesrud and his dishonesty; but it is just possible that this apparent blindness is only a sign of reticence. Professor Burrell remarks that in Kettlesrud a difficult character is turned out with finish and distinction, and Mrs. Wood praises the fidelity to life in North Dakota.

If "A Coffin for Anna" pleases by its difference, it may depress through drabness. Follow it with Ruth Burr Sanborn's "Professional Pride," which "though so obviously trumped up," in Professor Burrell's words, "is exactly the kind of humorous story I enjoy." The chairman is willing to admit the articulations of the plot, distinct as Mr. Skilton's or any self-respecting skeleton's, but insists that the joints are unobtrusive, like Minnie's, and that the plot grows out of character—Minnie's and Perry Wilder's. Minnie of Minneapolis comically consistent, *would* demand a day at Paradise Park, from time to time would break her bargain to be measured, and probably never would be measured except in the circumstances so adroitly introduced. Judith's being in the Park seems perilously near weak coincidence, but the outcome frees the author of this charge with something to boot.

The elements that contribute to pathos in Caroline Slade's "Mrs. Sabin" are fused by a flame of sympathy steady and pure, visible only in its effects. There are still women to be found, in communities called civilized, women like Mrs. Sabin, drudges a little lower than horses, without vacations, without companionship, and only the crude necessities of existence to compensate for the daily grind. Some of these women suffer, like Mrs. Sabin, without attention, without complaint, while the sick horse receives pity and the veterinarian's skill. Not every one of them, to be sure, has Mrs. Sabin's sweetness: "She felt a great overwhelming sense of gratitude. . . ." For what? for what? "That she would soon be asleep, that Mr. Sabin was so sorry, that Will was such a good boy, that she was to have pills for the easing of her pain." The story illustrates a phase of the universal and states the fact without a plea; but the plea is there. . . .

Wilbur Daniel Steele, who has made many peregrinations since his birth in Greensboro, North Carolina, has returned of late to that neighborhood for material. He has found it in the old Carolinians and their invasion by the Yankees, witness "The Silver Sword," more cataclysmically by the irruption of foreign hordes. "Pioneers," *Harper's*, July, 1929, was too late for consideration by the judges, but it is the more poignant story in its far sweeping implications of change, the passing of the old Charlestonian. . . . Kit Lorilard, of the tale here included, is an exact portrait of the ante-bellum woman

—now nearly extinct—in speech, manners, appearance, and unreconstructed feelings. She is a trifle harder, perhaps, toward the Yankees, because she loves Vendee better than others have loved their homes; but, if so, she makes a gesture greater than any of them have made: knowing at last she is beaten by the enemy, like a warrior she surrenders her sword. And that ending, if excellence is measured by emotion aroused, is one of the best in this collection.

Finally, the editor can write at no risk of self-flattery, this volume is one of the most distinguished in the series and one of the best balanced. Here are realism, romance, fantasy, humor; stories of character, plot, and local color; here are, besides one of Paris and one of England, stories of the South, the West, and the East of America.

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS.

New York City,
September 20, 1929.

BIG BLONDE

BY DOROTHY PARKER

FROM *Bookman*

DOROTHY ROTHSCHILD PARKER

whose verses, both serious and otherwise, are the joy of the sophisticated, is a regular contributor to current magazines. THE NEW YORKER *and* THE BOOKMAN *are the most favored. Miss Parker is a former member of the editorial staff of* VOGUE *and former dramatic critic for* VANITY FAIR. *Her books of collected poems are "Enough Rope," and "Sunset Gun."*

HAZEL MORSE was a large, fair woman of the type that incites some men when they use the word "blonde" to click their tongues and wag their heads roguishly. She prided herself upon her small feet and suffered for her vanity, boxing them in snub-toed, high-heeled slippers of the shortest bearable size. The curious things about her were her hands, strange terminations to the flabby white arms splattered with pale tan spots—long, quivering hands with deep and convex nails. She should not have disfigured them with little jewels.

She was not a woman given to recollections. At her middle thirties, her old days were a blurred and flickering sequence, an imperfect film, dealing with the actions of strangers.

In her twenties, after the deferred death of a hazy widowed mother, she had been employed as a model in a wholesale dress establishment—it was still the day of the big woman, and she was then prettily colored and erect and high-breasted. Her job was not onerous, and she met numbers of men and spent numbers of evenings with them, laughing at their jokes and telling them she loved their neckties. Men liked her, and she took it for granted that the liking of many men was a desirable thing. Popularity seemed to her to be worth all the work that had to be put into its achievement. Men liked you because you were fun, and when they liked you they took you out, and there you were. So, and successfully, she was fun. She was a good sport. Men like a good sport.

No other form of diversion, simpler or more complicated, drew her attention. She never pondered if she might not be better occupied doing something else. Her ideas, or, better, her acceptances, ran right along with those of the other substantially built blondes in whom she found her friends.

When she had been working in the dress establishment some years she met Herbie Morse. He was thin, quick, attractive, with shifting lines about his shiny, brown eyes and a habit of fiercely biting at the skin around his finger nails. He drank

largely; she found that entertaining. Her habitual greeting to him was an allusion to his state of the previous night.

"Oh, what a peach you had," she used to say, through her easy laugh. "I thought I'd die, the way you kept asking the waiter to dance with you."

She liked him immediately upon their meeting. She was enormously amused at his fast, slurred sentences, his interpolations of apt phrases from vaudeville acts and comic strips; she thrilled at the feel of his lean arm tucked firm beneath the sleeve of her coat; she wanted to touch the wet, flat surface of his hair. He was as promptly drawn to her. They were married six weeks after they had met.

She was delighted at the idea of being a bride; coquetted with it, played upon it. Other offers of marriage she had had, and not a few of them, but it happened that they were all from stout, serious men who had visited the dress establishment as buyers; men from Des Moines and Houston and Chicago and, in her phrase, even funnier places. There was always something immensely comic to her in the thought of living elsewhere than New York. She could not regard as serious proposals that she share a Western residence.

She wanted to be married. She was nearing thirty now, and she did not take the years well. She spread and softened, and her darkening hair turned her to inexpert dabblings with peroxide. There were times when she had little flashes of fear about her job. And she had had a couple of thousand evenings of being a good sport among her male acquaintances. She had come to be more conscientious than spontaneous about it.

Herbie earned enough, and they took a little apartment far uptown. There was a Mission-furnished dining room with a hanging central light globed in liver-colored glass; in the living room were an "overstuffed suite," a Boston fern, and a reproduction of the Henner *Magdalene* with the red hair and the blue draperies; the bedroom was in gray enamel and old rose, with Herbie's photograph on Hazel's dressing table and Hazel's likeness on Herbie's chest of drawers.

She cooked—and she was a good cook—and marketed and chatted with the delivery boys and the colored laundress. She loved the flat, she loved her life, she loved Herbie. In the first months of their marriage she gave him all the passion she was ever to know.

She had not realized how tired she was. It was a delight, a new game, a holiday, to give up being a good sport. If her head ached or her arches throbbed, she complained piteously, babyishly. If her mood was quiet, she did not talk. If tears came to her eyes, she let them fall.

She fell readily into the habit of tears during the first year of her marriage. Even in her good sport days she had been known to weep lavishly and disinterestedly on occasion. Her behavior at the theater was a standing joke. She could weep at anything in a play—tiny garments, love both unrequited and mutual, seduction, purity, faithful servitors, wedlock, the triangle.

"There goes Haze," her friends would say, watching her. "She's off again."

Wedded and relaxed, she poured her tears freely. To her who had laughed so much, crying was delicious. All sorrows became her sorrows; she was Tenderness. She would cry long and softly over newspaper accounts of kidnaped babies, deserted wives, unemployed men, strayed cats, heroic dogs. Even when the paper was no longer before her, her mind revolved upon these things and the drops slipped rhythmically over her plump cheeks.

"Honestly," she would say to Herbie, "all the sadness there is in the world when you stop to think about it!"

"Yeah," Herbie would say.

She missed nobody. The old crowd, the people who had brought her and Herbie together, dropped from their lives, lingeringly at first. When she thought of this at all it was only to consider it fitting. This was marriage. This was peace.

But the thing was that Herbie was not amused.

For a time he had enjoyed being alone with her. He found the voluntary isolation novel and sweet. Then it palled with a ferocious suddenness. It was as if one night, sitting with her in the steam-heated living room, he would ask no more; and the next night he was through and done with the whole thing.

He became annoyed by her misty melancholies. At first, when he came home to find her softly tired and moody, he kissed her neck and patted her shoulder and begged her to tell her Herbie what was wrong. She loved that. But time slid by, and he found that there was never anything really, personally, the matter.

"Ah, for God's sake," he would say. "Crabbing again. All right, sit here and crab your head off. I'm going out."

And he would slam out of the flat and come back late and drunk.

She was completely bewildered by what happened to their marriage. First they were lovers; and then, it seemed without transition, they were enemies. She never understood it.

There were longer and longer intervals between his leaving his office and his arrival at the apartment. She went through agonies of picturing him run over and bleeding, dead and covered with a sheet. Then she lost her fears for his safety and grew sullen and wounded. When a person wanted to be with a person he came as soon as possible. She desperately wanted him to want to be with her; her own hours only marked the time till he would come. It was often nearly nine o'clock before he came home to dinner. Always he had had many drinks, and their effect would die in him, leaving him loud and querulous and bristling for affronts.

He was too nervous, he said, to sit and do nothing for an evening. He boasted, probably not in all truth, that he had never read a book in his life.

"What am I expected to do—sit around this dump on my tail all night?" he would ask rhetorically. And again he would slam out.

She did not know what to do. She could not manage him. She could not meet him.

She fought him furiously. A terrific domesticity had come upon her, and she would bite and scratch to guard it. She wanted what she called "a nice home." She wanted a sober, tender husband, prompt at dinner, punctual at work. She wanted sweet, comforting evenings. The idea of intimacy with other men was terrible to her; the thought that Herbie might be seeking entertainment in other women set her frantic.

It seemed to her that almost everything she read—novels from the drug-store lending library, magazine stories, women's pages in the papers—dealt with wives who lost their husbands' love. She could bear those, at that, better than accounts of neat, companionable marriage and living happily ever after.

She was frightened. Several times when Herbie came home in the evening he found her determinedly dressed—she had

had to alter those of her clothes that were not new, to make them fasten—and rouged.

"Let's go wild to-night, what do you say?" she would hail him. "A person's got lots of time to hang around and do nothing when they're dead."

So they would go out, to chop houses and the less expensive cabarets. But it turned out badly. She could no longer find amusement in watching Herbie drink. She could not laugh at his whimsicalities, she was so tensely counting his indulgences. And she was unable to keep back her remonstrances—"Ah, come on, Herb, you've had enough, haven't you? You'll feel something terrible in the morning."

He would be immediately enraged. All right, crab; crab, crab, crab, that was all she ever did. What a lousy sport *she* was! There would be scenes, and one or the other of them would rise and stalk out in fury.

She could not recall the definite day that she started drinking, herself. There was nothing separate about her days. Like drops upon a windowpane, they ran together and trickled away. She had been married six months; then a year; then three years.

She had never needed to drink, formerly. She could sit for most of a night at a table where the others were imbibing earnestly and never droop in looks or spirits, nor be bored by the doings of those about her. If she took a cocktail, it was so unusual as to cause twenty minutes or so of jocular comment. But now anguish was in her. Frequently, after a quarrel, Herbie would stay out for the night, and she could not learn from him where the time had been spent. Her heart felt tight and sore in her breast, and her mind turned like an electric fan.

She hated the taste of liquor. Gin, plain or in mixtures, made her promptly sick. After experiment, she found that Scotch whisky was best for her. She took it without water, because that was the quickest way to its effect.

Herbie pressed it on her. He was glad to see her drink. They both felt it might restore her high spirits, and their good times together might again be possible.

"'Atta girl," he would approve her. "Let's see you get boiled, baby."

But it brought them no nearer. When she drank with him there would be a little while of gayety and then, strangely

without beginning, they would be in a wild quarrel. They would wake in the morning not sure what it had all been about, foggy as to what had been said and done, but each deeply injured and bitterly resentful. There would be days of vengeful silence.

There had been a time when they had made up their quarrels, usually in bed. There would be kisses and little names and assurances of fresh starts . . . "Oh, it's going to be great now, Herb. We'll have swell times. I was a crab. I guess I might have been tired. But everything's going to be swell. You'll see."

Now there were no gentle reconciliations. They resumed friendly relations only in the brief magnanimity caused by liquor, before more liquor drew them into new battles. The scenes became more violent. There were shouted invectives and pushes, and sometimes sharp slaps. Once she had a black eye. Herbie was horrified next day at sight of it. He did not go to work; he followed her about, suggesting remedies and heaping dark blame on himself. But after they had had a few drinks —"to pull themselves together"—she made so many wistful references to her bruise that he shouted at her, and rushed out, and was gone for two days.

Each time he left the place in rage he threatened never to come back. She did not believe him, nor did she consider separation. Somewhere in her head or her heart was the lazy, nebulous hope that things would change and she and Herbie settle suddenly into soothing married life. Here were her home, her furniture, her husband, her station. She summoned no alternatives.

She could no longer bustle and potter. She had no more vicarious tears; the hot drops she shed were for herself. She walked ceaselessly about the rooms, her thoughts running mechanically round and round Herbie. In those days began the hatred of being alone that she was never to overcome. You could be by yourself when things were all right, but when you were blue you got the howling horrors.

She commenced drinking alone, little, short drinks all through the day. It was only with Herbie that alcohol made her nervous and quick in offense. Alone, it blurred sharp things for her. She lived in a haze of it. Her life took on a dream-like quality. Nothing was astonishing.

A Mrs. Martin moved into the flat across the hall. She was a great blonde woman of forty, a promise in looks of what Mrs. Morse was to be. They made acquaintance, quickly became inseparable. Mrs. Morse spent her days in the opposite apartment. They drank together, to brace themselves after the drinks of the nights before.

She never confided her troubles about Herbie to Mrs. Martin. The subject was too bewildering to her to find comfort in talk. She let it be assumed that her husband's business kept him much away. It was not regarded as important; husbands, as such, played but shadowy parts in Mrs. Martin's circle.

Mrs. Martin had no visible spouse; you were left to decide for yourself whether he was or was not dead. She had an admirer, Joe, who came to see her almost nightly. Often he brought several friends with him—"The Boys," they were called. The Boys were big, red, good-humored men, perhaps forty-five, perhaps fifty. Mrs. Morse was glad of invitations to join the parties—Herbie was scarcely ever at home at night now. If he did come home, she did not visit Mrs. Martin. An evening alone with Herbie meant inevitably a quarrel, yet she would stay with him. There was always her thin and wordless idea that, maybe, this night, things would begin to be all right.

The boys brought plenty of liquor along with them whenever they came to Mrs. Martin's. Drinking with them, Mrs. Morse became lively and good-natured and audacious. She was quickly popular. When she had drunk enough to cloud her most recent battle with Herbie, she was excited by their approbation. Crab, was she? Rotten sport, was she? Well, there were some that thought different.

Ed was one of The Boys. He lived in Utica—had "his own business" there, was the awed report—but he came to New York almost every week. He was married. He showed Mrs. Morse the then current photographs of Junior and Sister, and she praised them abundantly and sincerely. Soon it was accepted by the others that Ed was her particular friend.

He staked her when they all played poker; sat next her and occasionally rubbed his knee against hers during the game. She was rather lucky. Frequently she went home with a twenty-dollar bill or a ten-dollar bill or a handful of crum-

pled dollars. She was glad of them. Herbie was getting, in her words, something awful about money. To ask him for it brought an instant row.

"What the hell do you do with it?" he would say. "Shoot it all on Scotch?"

"I try to run this house halfway decent," she would retort. "Never thought of that, did you? Oh, no, his lordship couldn't be bothered with that."

Again, she could not find a definite day to fix the beginning of Ed's proprietorship. It became his custom to kiss her on the mouth when he came in, as well as for farewell, and he gave her little quick kisses of approval all through the evening. She liked this rather more than she disliked it. She never thought of his kisses when she was not with him.

He would run his hand lingeringly over her back and shoulders.

"Some dizzy blonde, eh?" he would say. "Some doll."

One afternoon she came home from Mrs. Martin's to find Herbie in the bedroom. He had been away for several nights, evidently on a prolonged drinking bout. His face was gray, his hands jerked as if they were on wires. On the bed were two old suitcases, packed high. Only her photograph remained on his bureau, and the wide doors of his closet disclosed nothing but coat hangers.

"I'm blowing," he said. "I'm through with the whole works. I got a job in Detroit."

She sat down on the edge of the bed. She had drunk much the night before, and the four Scotches she had had with Mrs. Martin had only increased her fogginess.

"Good job?" she said.

"Oh, yeah," he said. "Looks all right."

He closed a suitcase with difficulty, swearing at it in whispers.

"There's some dough in the bank," he said. "The bank book's in your top drawer. You can have the furniture and stuff."

He looked at her, and his forehead twitched.

"God damn it, I'm through, I'm telling you," he cried. "I'm through."

"All right, all right," she said. "I heard you, didn't I?"

She saw him as if he were at one end of a cañon and she

at the other. Her head was beginning to ache bumpingly, and her voice had a dreary, tiresome tone. She could not have raised it.

"Like a drink before you go?" she asked.

Again he looked at her, and a corner of his mouth jerked up.

"Cockeyed again for a change, aren't you?" he said. "That's nice. Sure, get a couple of shots, will you?"

She went to the pantry, mixed him a stiff highball, poured herself a couple of inches of whisky, and drank it. Then she gave herself another portion and brought the glasses into the bedroom. He had strapped both suitcases and had put on his hat and overcoat.

He took his highball.

"Well," he said, and he gave a sudden, uncertain laugh. "Here's mud in your eye."

"Mud in your eye," she said.

They drank. He put down his glass and took up the heavy suitcase.

"Got to get a train around six," he said.

She followed him down the hall. There was a song, a song that Mrs. Martin played doggedly on the phonograph, running loudly through her mind. She had never liked the thing.

Night and daytime,
Always playtime.
Ain't we got fun?

At the door he put down the bags and faced her.

"Well," he said. "Well, take care of yourself. You'll be all right, will you?"

"Oh, sure," she said.

He opened the door, then came back to her, holding out his hand.

"'Bye, Haze," he said. "Good luck to you."

She took his hand and shook it.

"Pardon my wet glove," she said.

When the door had closed behind him she went back to the pantry.

She was flushed and lively when she went in to Mrs. Martin's that evening. The Boys were there, Ed among them.

He was glad to be in town, frisky and loud and full of jokes. But she spoke quietly to him for a minute.

"Herbie blew to-day," she said. "Going to live out West."

"That so?" he said. He looked at her and played with the fountain pen clipped to his waistcoat pocket.

"Think he's gone for good, do you?" he asked.

"Yeah," she said. "I know he is. I know. Yeah."

"You going to live on across the hall just the same?" he said. "Know what you're going to do?"

"Gee, I don't know," she said. "I don't give much of a damn."

"Oh, come on, that's no way to talk," he told her. "What you need—you need a little snifter. How about it?"

"Yeah," she said. "Just straight."

She won forty-three dollars at poker. When the game broke up Ed took her back to her apartment.

"Got a little kiss for me?" he asked.

He wrapped her in his big arms and kissed her violently. She was entirely passive. He held her away and looked at her.

"Little tight, honey?" he asked anxiously. "Not going to be sick, are you?"

"Me?" she said. "I'm swell."

II

When Ed left in the morning he took her photograph with him. He said he wanted her picture to look at, up in Utica. "You can have that one on the bureau," she said.

She put Herbie's picture in a drawer, out of her sight. When she could look at it she meant to tear it up. She was fairly successful in keeping her mind from racing around him. Whisky slowed it for her. She was almost peaceful, in her mist.

She accepted her relationship with Ed without question or enthusiasm. When he was away she seldom thought definitely of him. He was good to her; he gave her frequent presents and a regular allowance. She was even able to save. She did not plan ahead of any day, but her wants were few, and you might as well put money in the bank as have it lying around.

When the lease of her apartment neared its end it was Ed who suggested moving. His friendship with Mrs. Martin and

Joe had become strained over a dispute at poker; a feud was impending.

"Let's get the hell out of here," Ed said. "What I want you to have is a place near the Grand Central. Make it easier for me."

So she took a little flat in the Forties. A colored maid came in every day to clean and to make coffee for her—she was "through with that housekeeping stuff," she said, and Ed, twenty years married to a passionately domestic woman, admired this romantic uselessness and felt doubly a man of the world in abetting it.

The coffee was all she had until she went out to dinner, but alcohol kept her fat. Prohibition she regarded only as a basis for jokes. You could always get all you wanted. She was never noticeably drunk and seldom nearly sober. It required a larger daily allowance to keep her misty-minded. Too little, and she was achingly melancholy.

Ed brought her to Jimmy's. He was proud, with the pride of the transient who would be mistaken for a native, in his knowledge of small, recent restaurants occupying the lower floors of shabby brownstone houses; places where, upon mentioning the name of an habitué friend, might be obtained strange whisky and fresh gin in many of their ramifications. Jimmy's place was the favorite of his acquaintances.

There, through Ed, Mrs. Morse met many men and women, formed quick friendships. The men often took her out when Ed was in Utica. He was proud of her popularity.

She fell into the habit of going to Jimmy's alone when she had no engagement. She was certain to meet some people she knew, and join them. It was a club for her friends, both men and women.

The women at Jimmy's looked remarkably alike, and this was curious, for, through feuds, removals and opportunities of more profitable contacts, the personnel of the group changed constantly. Yet always the newcomers resembled those whom they replaced. They were all big women and stout, broad of shoulder and abundantly breasted, with faces thickly clothed in soft, high-colored flesh. They laughed loud and often, showing opaque and lusterless teeth like squares of crockery. There was about them the health of the big, yet a slight, unwholesome suggestion of stubborn preservation.

They might have been thirty-six or forty-five or anywhere between.

They composed their titles of their own first names with their husband's surnames—Mrs. Florence Miller, Mrs. Vera Riley, Mrs. Lilian Block. This gave at the same time the solidity of marriage and the glamour of freedom. Yet only one or two were actually divorced. Most of them never referred to their dimmed spouses; some, a shorter time separate, described them in terms of great biological interest. Several were mothers, each of an only child—a boy at school somewhere, or a girl being cared for by a grandmother. Often, well on toward morning, there would be displays of kodak portraits and of tears.

They were comfortable women, cordial and friendly and irrepressibly matronly. Theirs was the quality of ease. Become fatalistic, especially about money matters, they were unworried. Whenever their funds dropped alarmingly, a new donor appeared; this had always happened. The aim of each was to have one man, permanently, to pay all her bills, in return for which she would have immediately given up other admirers and probably would have become exceedingly fond of him; for the affections of all of them were, by now, unexacting, tranquil, and easily arranged. This end, however, grew increasingly difficult yearly. Mrs. Morse was regarded as fortunate.

Ed had a good year, increased her allowance and gave her a sealskin coat. But she had to be careful of her moods with him. He insisted upon gayety. He would not listen to admissions of aches or weariness.

"Hey, listen," he would say, "I got worries of my own, and plenty. Nobody wants to hear other people's troubles, sweetie. What you got to do, you got to be a sport and forget it. See? Well, slip us a little smile, then. That's my girl."

She never had enough interest to quarrel with him as she had with Herbie, but she wanted the privilege of occasional admitted sadness. It was strange. The other women she saw did not have to fight their moods. There was Mrs. Florence Miller who got regular crying jags, and the men sought only to cheer and comfort her. The others spent whole evenings in grieved recitals of worries and ills; their escorts paid them

deep sympathy. But she was instantly undesirable when she was low in spirits. Once, at Jimmy's, when she could not make herself lively, Ed had walked out and left her.

"Why the hell don't you stay home and not go spoiling everybody's evening?" he had roared.

Even her slightest acquaintance seemed irritated if she were not conspicuously light-hearted.

"What's the matter with you, anyway?" they would say. "Be your age, why don't you? Have a little drink and snap out of it."

When her relationship with Ed had continued nearly three years he moved to Florida to live. He hated leaving her; he gave her a large check and some shares of a sound stock, and his pale eyes were wet when he said good-bye. She did not miss him. He came to New York infrequently, perhaps two or three times a year, and hurried directly from the train to see her. She was always pleased to have him come and never sorry to see him go.

Charley, an acquaintance of Ed's that she had met at Jimmy's, had long admired her. He had always made opportunities of touching her and leaning close to talk to her. He asked repeatedly of all their friends if they had ever heard such a fine laugh as she had. After Ed left Charley became the main figure in her life. She classified him and spoke of him as "not so bad." There was nearly a year of Charley; then she divided her time between him and Sydney, another frequenter of Jimmy's; then Charley slipped away altogether.

Sydney was a little, brightly dressed, clever Jew. She was perhaps nearest contentment with him. He amused her always; her laughter was not forced.

He admired her completely. Her softness and size delighted him. And he thought she was great, he often told her, because she kept gay and lively when she was drunk.

"Once I had a gal," he said, "used to try to throw herself out of the window every time she got a can on. Jee-*zuss*," he added feelingly.

Then Sydney married a rich and watchful bride, and then there was Billy. No—after Sydney came Ferd, then Billy. In her haze she never recalled how men entered her life and left it. There were no surprises. She had no thrill at their ad-

vent nor woe at their departure. She seemed to be always able to attract men. There was never another as rich as Ed, but they were all generous to her, in their means.

Once she had news of Herbie. She met Mrs. Martin dining at Jimmy's, and the old friendship was vigorously renewed. The still admiring Joe, while on a business trip, had seen Herbie. He had settled in Chicago, he looked fine, he was living with some woman—seemed to be crazy about her. Mrs. Morse had been drinking vastly that day. She took the news with mild interest, as one hearing of the sex peccadilloes of somebody whose name is, after a moment's groping, familiar.

"Must be damn near seven years since I saw him," she commented. "Gee. Seven years."

More and more her days lost their individuality. She never knew dates, nor was sure of the day of the week.

"My God, was that a year ago!" she would exclaim, when an event was recalled in conversation.

She was tired so much of the time. Tired and blue. Almost everything could give her the blues. Those old horses she saw on Sixth Avenue—struggling and slipping along the car tracks, or standing at the curb, their heads dropped level with their worn knees. The tightly stored tears would squeeze from her eyes as she teetered past on her aching feet in the stubby, champagne-colored slippers.

The thought of death came and stayed with her and lent her a sort of drowsy cheer. It would be nice, nice and restful, to be dead.

There was no settled, shocked moment when she first thought of killing herself; it seemed to her as if the idea had always been with her. She pounced upon all the accounts of suicides in the newspapers. There was an epidemic of self-killings—or maybe it was just that she searched for the stories of them so eagerly that she found many. To read of them roused reassurance in her; she felt a cozy solidarity with the big company of the voluntary dead.

She slept, aided by whisky, till deep into the afternoons, then lay abed, a bottle and glass at her hand, until it was time to dress to go out for dinner. She was beginning to feel toward alcohol a little puzzled distrust, as toward an old friend who has refused a simple favor. Whisky could still soothe her for most of the time, but there were sudden, inexplicable moments

when the cloud fell treacherously away from her, and she was sawn by the sorrow and bewilderment and nuisance of all living. She played voluptuously with the thought of cool, sleepy retreat. She had never been troubled by religious belief, and no vision of an after-life intimidated her. She dreamed by day of never again putting on tight shoes, of never having to laugh and listen and admire, of never more being a good sport. Never.

But how would you do it? It made her sick to think of jumping from heights. She could not stand a gun. At the theater, if one of the actors drew a revolver, she crammed her fingers into her ears and could not even look at the stage until after the shot had been fired. There was no gas in her flat. She looked long at the bright blue veins in her slim wrists —a cut with a razor blade, and there you'd be. But it would hurt, hurt like hell, and there would be blood to see. Poison— something tasteless and quick and painless—was the thing. But they wouldn't sell it to you in the drug stores, because of the law.

She had few other thoughts.

There was a new man now—Art. He was short and fat and exacting and hard on her patience when he was drunk. But there had been only occasionals for some time before him, and she was glad of a little stability. Too, Art must be away for weeks at a stretch, selling silks, and that was restful. She was convincingly gay with him, though the effort shook her viciously.

"The best sport in the world," he would murmur, deep in her neck. "The best sport in the world."

One night, when he had taken her to Jimmy's, she went into the dressing room with Mrs. Florence Miller. There, while designing curly mouths on their faces with lip rouge, they compared experiences of insomnia.

"Honestly," Mrs. Morse said, "I wouldn't close an eye if I didn't go to bed full of Scotch. I lie there and toss and turn and toss and turn. Blue! Does a person get blue lying awake that way!"

"Say, listen, Hazel," Mrs. Miller said impressively, "I'm telling you I'd be awake for a year if I didn't take veronal. That stuff makes you sleep like a fool."

"Isn't it poison or something?" Mrs. Morse asked.

"Oh, you take too much and you're out for the count," said Mrs. Miller. "I just take five grains—they come in tablets. I'd be scared to fool around with it. But five grains and you cork off pretty."

"Can you get it anywhere?" Mrs. Morse felt superbly Machiavellian.

"Get all you want in Jersey," said Mrs. Miller. "They won't give it to you here without you have a doctor's prescription. Finished? We'd better go back and see what the boys are doing."

That night Art left Mrs. Morse at the door of her apartment; his mother was in town. Mrs. Morse was still sober, and it happened that there was no whisky left in her cupboard. She lay in bed, looking up at the black ceiling.

She rose early, for her, and went to New Jersey. She had never taken the tube, and did not understand it. So she went to the Pennsylvania Station and bought a railroad ticket to Newark. She thought of nothing in particular on the trip out. She looked at the uninspired hats of the women about her and gazed through the smeared window at the flat, gritty scene.

In Newark, in the first drug store she came to, she asked for a tin of talcum powder, a nail brush, and a box of veronal tablets. The powder and the brush were to make the hypnotic seem also a casual need. The clerk was entirely unconcerned. "We only keep them in bottles," he said, and wrapped up for her a little glass vial containing ten white tablets, stacked one on another.

She went to another drug store and bought a face cloth, an orange-wood stick, and a bottle of veronal tablets. The clerk was also uninterested.

"Well, I guess I got enough to kill an ox," she thought, and went back to the station.

At home, she put the little vials in the drawer of her dressing table and stood looking at them with a dreamy tenderness.

"There they are, God bless them," she said, and she kissed her finger tip and touched each bottle.

The colored maid was busy in the living room.

"Hey, Nettie," Mrs. Morse called. "Be an angel, will you? Run around to Jimmy's and get me a quart of Scotch."

She hummed while she awaited the girl's return.

During the next few days, whisky ministered to her as tenderly as it had done when she first turned to its aid. Alone, she was soothed and vague, at Jimmy's she was the gayest of the groups. Art was delighted with her.

Then, one night, she had an appointment to meet Art at Jimmy's for an early dinner. He was to leave afterward on a business excursion, to be away for a week. Mrs. Morse had been drinking all the afternoon; while she dressed to go out she felt herself rising pleasurably from drowsiness to high spirits. But as she came out into the street the effects of the whisky deserted her completely, and she was filled with a slow, grinding wretchedness so horrible that she stood swaying on the pavement, unable for a moment to move forward. It was a gray night with spurts of mean, thin snow, and the streets shone with dark ice. As she slowly crossed Sixth Avenue consciously dragging one foot past the other, a big, scarred horse pulling a rickety express wagon crashed to his knees before her. The driver swore and screamed and lashed the beast insanely, bringing the whip back over his shoulder for every blow, while the horse struggled to get a footing on the slippery asphalt. A group gathered and watched with interest.

Art was waiting, when Mrs. Morse reached Jimmy's.

"What's the matter with you, for God's sake?" was his greeting to her.

"I saw a horse," she said. "Gee, I—a person feels sorry for horses. I—it isn't just horses. Everything's kind of terrible, isn't it? I can't help getting sunk."

"Ah, sunk, me eye," he said. "What's the idea of all the bellyaching? What have you got to be sunk about?"

"I can't help it," she said.

"Ah, help it, me eye," he said. "Pull yourself together, will you? Come on and sit down, and take that face off you."

She drank industriously and she tried hard, but she could not overcome her melancholy. Others joined them and commented on her gloom, and she could do no more for them than smile weakly. She made little dabs at her eyes with her handkerchief, trying to time her movements so they would be unnoticed, but several times Art caught her and scowled and shifted impatiently in his chair.

When it was time for him to go to his train she said she would leave, too, and go home.

"And not a bad idea, either," he said. "See if you can't sleep yourself out of it. I'll see you Thursday. For God's sake, try and cheer up by then, will you?"

"Yeah," she said. "I will."

In her bedroom she undressed with a tense speed wholly unlike her usual slow uncertainty. She put on her nightgown, took off her hair net, and passed the comb quickly through her dry, varicolored hair. Then she took the two little vials from the drawer and carried them into the bathroom. The splintering misery had gone from her, and she felt the quick excitement of one who is about to receive an anticipated gift.

She uncorked the vials, filled a glass with water, and stood before the mirror, a tablet between her fingers. Suddenly she bowed graciously to her reflection and raised the glass to it.

"Well, here's mud in your eye," she said.

The tablets were unpleasant to take, dry and powdery and sticking obstinately halfway down her throat. It took her a long time to swallow all twenty of them. She stood watching her reflection with deep, impersonal interest, studying the movements of the gulping throat. Once more she spoke aloud to it.

"For God's sake, try and cheer up by Thursday, will you?" she said. "Well, you know what he can do. He and the whole lot of them."

She had no idea how quickly to expect effect from the veronal. When she had taken the last tablet she stood uncertainly, wondering, still with a courteous, vicarious interest, if death would strike her down then and there. She felt in no way strange, save for a slight stirring of sickness from the effort of swallowing the tablets, nor did her reflected face look at all different. It would not be immediate, then; it might even take an hour or so.

She stretched her arms high and gave a vast yawn.

"Guess I'll go to bed," she said. "Gee, I'm nearly dead."

That struck her as comic, and she turned out the bathroom light and went in and laid herself down in her bed, chuckling softly all the time.

"Gee, I'm nearly dead," she quoted. "That's a hot one!"

III

Nettie, the colored maid, came in late the next afternoon to clean the apartment and found Mrs. Morse in her bed. But then, that was not unusual. Usually, though, the sounds of cleaning waked her, and she did not like to wake up. Nettie, an agreeable girl, had learned to move softly about her work.

But when she had done the living room and stolen in to tidy the little square bedroom, she could not avoid a tiny clatter as she arranged the objects on the dressing table. Instinctively she glanced over her shoulder at the sleeper, and without warning a sickly uneasiness crept over her. She came to the bed and stared down at the woman lying there.

Mrs. Morse lay on her back, one flabby white arm flung up, the wrist against her forehead. Her stiff hair hung untenderly along her face. The bed covers were pushed down, exposing a deep square of soft neck and a pink nightgown, its fabric worn uneven by many launderings; her great breast, freed from their tight confiner, sagged beneath her armpits. Now and then she made knotted, snoring sounds, and from the corner of her opened mouth to the blurred turn of her jaw ran a lane of crusted spittle.

"Mis' Morse," Nettie called. "Oh, Mis' Morse! It's terrible late."

Mrs. Morse made no move.

"Mis' Morse," said Nettie. "Look, Mis' Morse. How'm I goin' get this bed made?"

Panic sprang upon the girl. She shook the woman's hot shoulder.

"Ah, wake up, will yuh?" she whined. "Ah, please wake up."

Suddenly the girl turned and ran out in the hall to the elevator door, keeping her thumb firm on the black, shiny button until the elderly car and its Negro attendant stood before her. She poured a jumble of words over the boy and led him back to the apartment. He tiptoed creakingly in to the bedside; first gingerly, then so lustily that he left marks in the soft flesh, he prodded the unconscious woman.

"Hey, there!" he cried, and listened intently, as for an echo.

"Jeez. Out like a light," he commented.

At his interest in the spectacle, Nettie's panic left her. Importance was big in both of them. They talked in quick, unfinished whispers, and it was the boy's suggestion that he fetch the young doctor who lived on the ground floor. Nettie hurried along with him. They looked forward to the limelit moment of breaking their news of something untoward, something pleasurably unpleasant. Mrs. Morse had become the medium of drama. With no ill wish to her, they hoped that her state was serious, that she would not let them down by being awake and normal on their return. A little fear of this determined them to make the most, to the doctor, of her present condition. "Matter of life and death" returned to Nettie from her thin store of reading. She considered startling the doctor with the phrase.

The doctor was in and none too pleased at interruption. He wore a yellow and blue striped dressing gown, and he was lying on his sofa, laughing, with a dark girl, her face scaly with inexpensive powder, who perched on the arm. Half-emptied highball glasses stood beside them, and her coat and hat were neatly hung up with the comfortable implication of a long stay.

Always something, the doctor grumbled. Couldn't let anybody alone after a hard day. But he put some bottles and instruments into a case, changed his dressing gown for his coat, and started out with the Negroes.

"Snap it up there, big boy," the girl called after him. "Don't be all night."

The doctor strode loudly into Mrs. Morse's flat and on to the bedroom, Nettie and the boy right behind him. Mrs. Morse had not moved; her sleep was as deep, but soundless, now. The doctor looked sharply at her, then plunged his thumbs into the lidded pits above her eyeballs and threw his weight upon them. A high, sickened cry broke from Nettie.

"Look like he tryin' to push her right on th'ough the bed," said the boy. He chuckled.

Mrs. Morse gave no sign under the pressure. Abruptly the doctor abandoned it, and with one quick movement swept the covers down to the foot of the bed. With another he flung her nightgown back and lifted the thick, white legs, cross-hatched with blocks of tiny, iris-colored veins. He pinched

them repeatedly, with long, cruel nips, back of the knees. She did not awaken.

"What's she been drinking?" he asked Nettie, over his shoulder.

With the certain celerity of one who knows just where to lay hands on a thing, Nettie went into the bathroom, bound for the cupboard where Mrs. Morse kept her whisky. But she stopped at the sight of the two vials, with their red and white labels, lying before the mirror. She brought them to the doctor.

"Oh, for the Lord Almighty's sweet sake!" he said. He dropped Mrs. Morse's limp legs and pushed them impatiently across the bed. "What did she want to go taking that tripe for? Rotten yellow trick, that's what a thing like that is. Now we'll have to pump her out, and all that stuff. Nuisance, a thing like that is; that's what it amounts to. Here, George, take me down in the elevator. You wait here, maid. She won't do anything."

"She won' die on me, will she?" cried Nettie.

"No," said the doctor. "God, no. You couldn't kill her with an ax."

IV

After two days Mrs. Morse came back to consciousness, dazed at first, then with a comprehension that brought with it the slow, saturating wretchedness.

"Oh, Lord, oh, Lord," she moaned, and tears for herself and for life striped her cheeks.

Nettie came in at the sound. For two days she had done the ugly, incessant tasks in the nursing of the unconscious, for two nights she had caught broken bits of sleep on the living room couch. She looked coldly at the big, blown woman in the bed.

"What you been tryin' to do, Mis' Morse?" she said. "What kine o' work is that, takin' all that stuff?"

"Oh, Lord," moaned Mrs. Morse again, and she tried to cover her eyes with her arms. But the joints felt stiff and brittle, and she cried out at their ache.

"Tha's no way to ack, takin' them pills," said Nettie. "You can thank you' stars you heah at all. How you feel now?"

"Oh, I feel great," said Mrs. Morse. "Swell, I feel."

Her hot, painful tears fell as if they would never stop.

"Tha's no way to take on, cryin' like that," Nettie said. "After what you done. The doctor, he says he could have you arrested, doin' a thing like that. He was fit to be tied, here."

"Why couldn't he let me alone?" wailed Mrs. Morse. "Why the hell couldn't he have?"

"Tha's terr'ble, Mis' Morse, swearin' an' talkin' like that," said Nettie, "after what people done for you. Here I ain' had no sleep at all, an' I had to give up goin' out to my other ladies!"

"Oh, I'm sorry, Nettie," she said. "You're a peach. I'm sorry I've given you so much trouble. I couldn't help it. I just got sunk. Didn't you ever feel like doing it? When everything looks just lousy to you?"

"I wouldn't think o' no such thing," declared Nettie. "You got to cheer up. Tha's what you got to do. Everybody's got their troubles."

"Yeah," said Mrs. Morse. "I know."

"Come a pretty picture card for you," Nettie said. "Maybe that will cheer you up."

She handed Mrs. Morse a post card. Mrs. Morse had to cover one eye with her hand, in order to read the message; her eyes were not yet focusing correctly.

It was from Art. On the back of a view of the Detroit Athletic Club he had written:

Greeting and salutations. Hope you have lost that gloom. Cheer up and don't take any rubber nickels. See you on Thursday.

She dropped the card to the floor. Misery crushed her as if she were between great smooth stones. There passed before her a slow, slow pageant of days spent lying in her flat, of evenings at Jimmy's being a good sport, making herself laugh and coo at Art and other Arts; she saw a long parade of weary horses and shivering beggars and all beaten, driven, stumbling things. Her feet throbbed as if she had crammed them into the stubby champagne-colored slippers. Her heart seemed to swell and fester.

"Nettie," she cried, "for heaven's sake, pour me a drink, will you?"

The maid looked doubtful.

"Now you know, Mis' Morse," she said, "you been near daid. I don' know if the doctor he let you drink nothin' yet."

"Oh, never mind him," she said. "You get me one and bring in the bottle. Take one yourself."

"Well," said Nettie.

She poured them each a drink, deferentially leaving hers in the bathroom to be taken in solitude, and brought Mrs. Morse's glass in to her.

Mrs. Morse looked into the liquor and shuddered back from its odor. Maybe it would help. Maybe, when you had been knocked cold for a few days, your very first drink would give you a lift. Maybe whisky would be her friend again. She prayed without addressing a God, without knowing a God. Oh, please, please, let her be able to get drunk, please keep her always drunk.

She lifted the glass.

"Thanks, Nettie," she said. "Here's mud in your eye."

The maid giggled. "Tha's the way, Mis' Morse," she said. "You cheer up, now."

"Yeah," said Mrs. Morse. "Sure."

THE HOMESICK LADIES

BY SIDNEY HOWARD

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SIDNEY HOWARD

won the Pulitzer Prize of $1,000 for the original American play performed in New York in 1924 with "They Knew What They Wanted," a Theatre Guild production. Mr. Howard, who has also gained distinction as a writer of newspaper articles, has published a book of short stories under the title "Three Flights Up."

HORACE RIDEOUT held out for a long time against the idea of selling. Horace loved the house for itself, for its immemorial association with his family, and because he enjoyed the life he led in it. He did not share his wife's eagerness for the prospective urbanities of Boston. He knew that once he resigned the chair of the local historical society he could never hope to occupy the chair of anything else.

"After Natalie's married," his wife reasoned with him, "there'll be no one to carry on the name, and you'll admit it's a burden to keep the place up."

Horace yielded at last. He stood his ground only in his determination to do what he considered the right thing by his two half sisters.

MY DEAR BESSIE [he wrote to the elder of them—they were both many years his senior].

Since my mother's death, in 1903, I have made it a practice to invite you to spend Thanksgiving with us. I attribute your consistent disregard of all my previous invitations to your natural stubbornness, discourtesy, and pride. I rise above it.

I rise above it because, on this occasion, I have to notify you of a fact which may possibly concern you more deeply than mere social obligations. My wife and I have decided upon removing our residence to Boston, and I shall be interested to hear what, if any, objection you may put forward to our selling this house.

In spite of my full legal right to dispose of my own property as I see fit, I cannot in conscience ignore your personal and sentimental interest in your former home. With this in mind, I pass over our long quarrel to offer you the opportunity to take the house and land off my hands at a figure to be agreed upon. I shall also consider as valid any reluctance of yours to see the house pass out of the family, provided you are willing to share with me the burden of its upkeep.

That sentence pleased him. He prided himself on his fairness, and that sentence struck him as exceptionally fair.

"Will you be good enough," he concluded, "to signify in writing what, if any, action you propose taking?"

He signed himself: "Most sincerely, your brother." Then

he added a postscript which read: "As a formality, I am addressing a similar notification to our sister."

He showed both letters to his wife. "That, I think, makes our position clear," he said.

Caroline warned him not to expect her to sympathize with such quixotics, and once again said: "There is such a thing as too much conscience, particularly in one's attitude toward the undeserving."

"I have never felt," Horace asserted, "that my mother dealt fairly by her stepdaughters."

"That," said Caroline, "does not give Bessie any excuse for her rudeness to me. And as for your sister Maisie," she added, "the less said about *her* the better!"

Horace dropped the subject. He mailed his letter to his sister Elizabeth in New York, where she lived and practised the real estate business. The "similar notification" he mailed to his sister Maisie in Rome. It was the first communication that had been addressed to her from her old home since the day, so long ago, of her first and fatal disgrace.

He mailed the two letters early in October to allow his sisters ample time in which to appreciate his generosity. He felt not a little injured, as the first of November went by, that neither of them vouchsafed him any answer. About the middle of November, however, a Mrs. Willetts, of Indianapolis, made him a most advantageous offer for the house. After that he felt less injured. He pronounced himself delighted with her proposition, and only asked that she leave matters open until Thanksgiving Day. As he said to Caroline: "Even though we may be practically certain that neither one of them"—meaning his sisters—"intends to interfere with the sale, still we cannot afford to give up the satisfaction of feeling ourselves wholly in the right." He had already commenced making his plans to invest the Willettses' thousands in foreign travel when his sister Bessie did take action and, this, in one blow, dashed his incipient hopes.

"I shall be with you for Thanksgiving," she wired him. "I wish I might say that I look forward to seeing you."

Neither he nor Caroline could help wondering just what that telegram portended. "Now you see what I meant by too much conscience," said Caroline.

Caroline faced the facts bravely, however. She was neither

a small woman nor a mean one, and she knew her duty, as New Englanders are only too apt to do. She spared no pains to prepare for her sister-in-law's visit. She even fished into the store of family photographs and drew thence a portrait of her husband's two sisters, taken together in their youth, at the beginning of the gay 'nineties.

They were handsome girls, high-spirited daughters of the Puritan stock. Their brows were strong and proud; their eyes clear and proud; their mouths firm and proud. Caroline, studying the pair, thought how little her husband resembled them. Intractable, unmanageable girls, she thought. Her own Natalie had something of their look, lacking its coloration of perverseness. The longer she studied the portrait the more sorry she found herself that two such splendid creatures should have come off so futile.

She wished that she might have found a picture of Elizabeth alone. But Horace remembered the old days, before the trouble began, and told her now inseparable the sisters had been then, even in photography. So Caroline stood her find on the mantel in the drawing room, beneath Sargent's portrait of the girls' stepmother, old Nathaniel Rideout's second wife, to whom Horace owed at once his existence, his character, and his faults.

This, hoping for the best against long odds and a heavy cold, Caroline did on the very day of Miss Elizabeth Rideout's announced arrival. That was the day before Thanksgiving—the Wednesday—and Miss Rideout was expected by the three o'clock from Boston.

The Crandalls, who lived next door to the Rideouts, were scarcely less involved in Miss Elizabeth's advant than the Rideouts themselves. Dr. Crandall, a widower, stood to the Rideouts in the position of their oldest friend, a traditional family intimacy which young Roger Crandall prepared to carry on by marrying Natalie Rideout.

Dr. Crandall, in his sixties, belonged to that class of men called, by other men, "disappointments." There had been a time, thirty-odd years before the commencement of this story, when Crandall showed promise of assuming a great place in his profession. The Deity, it would appear, compensated the promise by neglecting to make Crandall a great man in him-

self. From a most brilliant young neurologist in both Vienna and Boston, he had petered out in a pleasant, leisured life, in a late, uneventful, brief marriage, in the esteem of hypochondriac ladies and in Horace Rideout's friendship. Horace liked him for the very qualities which had made him a failure at his job, for the very fact of his failure. Dr. Crandall made Horace feel less of a nonentity and, therefore, more of a man. Who thought seriously of Dr. Crandall now? Only himself, from time to time, on rare occasions of self-interest.

One such moment struck and was real and roused him from his languor on the evening when Roger, just home from the Rideouts, announced the aunt's impending arrival. "Bessie Rideout after all these years?" the doctor murmured, and got up out of his chair to walk uneasily up and down his long, dark library. Presently, his mind made up, he went out through the gate in the privet hedge between the dooryards, rang the Rideouts' bell, and asked for Caroline.

"So Bessie's coming back!" he said to her.

She looked sharply at him, because she understood his gravity and knew that he knew she understood it. "After all these years," she answered, to help him along.

He evaded her eyes. Something like shyness, something the least bit frightened, broke up the serenity of his usual mien. "I'm begging off Thanksgiving dinner," he told her.

"For the first time in twenty years!" Caroline observed. "It does seem extra delicate of you. Aren't you forgetting that Bessie's an old woman now?"

"No wound," he replied, "is so old you can't open it."

"I think he's right," Horace gloomily put in. "One never knows what to expect of my sister Bessie."

"That's that," said Caroline.

Dr. Crandall looked wanly into the autumn twilight beyond the windowpane. "Bessie will be coming here again," he reflected aloud. "I shall see the redoubtable Bessie again! How long ago it all seems now, and yet how real again! I'm glad it's Bessie I'll have to face and not Maisie."

"Oh!" Horace said. "You need have no fears on that score! We can guarantee to spare you Maisie!"

"Thank you for that, at any rate," said Dr. Crandall, and went home to his dinner. Thus Miss Elizabeth Rideout's welcome was prepared in yet another quarter.

All the way from New York that redoubtable lady, as Dr. Crandall had described her, sat in her compartment and wondered at the hold the old house exercised over her, the hold that could fetch her away, alike from her habits and her moorings. "It may be homesickness," she suspected. "I'd like to know what else it could be!"

She weighed close on three hundred avoirdupois, Miss Rideout did, was not a bit handsome any more, and called herself "The Madame of New York Real Estate." She enjoyed wondering about things in a quiet way, provided she could get through the process without committing herself to any action. She wondered about the house, about her brother and his family; even, a little, about her sister Maisie. "Old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago!"—they made her feel humble and foolish about herself and her proud self-sufficiency. They made her ask herself if this long estrangement had ever been anything more than a perverse self-indulgence. They made her feel downright kindly toward that fuss-budget young half brother of hers.

She rested her mammoth forearm on the window sill and dropped her heavy head into the palm of her hand. "It's a queer thing," she said to herself, very much as Dr. Crandall had done, "how alive all that old rumpus seems again!"

Then it occurred to her (for she was not disinclined to philosophize) that perhaps life lives for us only up to the point where we have to begin making it work for us instead. What she wanted to know was whether life might not begin to live for her anew now that she had reached the point where she no longer cared whether it worked for her or not. She wondered if life were not playing just that trick on her in reviving so many of the old memories and putting so much of flesh and blood into them.

"It *is* going home," she concluded. "It *is* going home that's got me so stirred up."

Then she wondered if Steve Crandall were still living. "Sixty-seven, he'd be," she judged. The train came into the landmark zone: she saw landmarks that had once meant going home to her and still meant just that. "Heigho!" she sighed.

Even if she had not been so gently disposed in advance, the sight of Horace on the platform would have disarmed her, so distraught he looked and so frightened of her. "Well,

Horace," she began, "I suppose you think this very odd of me?"

"I'm trying my best not to," his tactless honesty informed her.

"It *is* odd," she said. "Odd as the very devil!"

He apologized for his wife's absence from the platform. "She's asthmatically inclined," he said, "and with her cold in this rainy weather . . ."

"You must tell me your wife's name," she cut him off. "I can't be calling my sister-in-law 'my brother's wife' to her face!"

"Her name is Caroline," said Horace. "She was. . . ."

"Never mind who she was! Who's this?"

Horace presented his daughter. "My daughter, Natalie. Natalie, your aunt Bessie."

"Named after her grandfather Rideout?" Miss Elizabeth supposed.

"A corruption of Nathaniel," Horace explained.

His sister grunted. "Corrupting anything connected with that old buzzard strikes me as gilding the lily!"

"You're speaking of my father!" Horace protested.

"He was my father, too," Miss Elizabeth replied, "and that wasn't the worst of his sins!" She turned to Natalie, though, with the most charming warmth. "Never *you* mind, my dear," she added. "You're a damned pretty girl."

They got into the car with that and drove through the town to the house. Miss Elizabeth sat, the short while, without speaking, looking into the drizzle as one familiar vista after another disclosed itself. She got over all doubts as to what it was had brought her from New York. So homesick she became that she barely managed to keep from crying and had no strength left in her to call up her usual bravado. The elms hit her the hardest: some that she remembered, some that had grown to tree's estate since her day, some that were gone and, by their absence, made themselves as evident to her recollection as missing teeth in a beloved smile.

The sight of the house caused at once such contraction in her throat and such weakness in her knees that, when her brother made to help her to alight, she laid her hand upon his arm and stopped him. Homesickness, one of the most gener-

ous of the more worthy human emotions, let loose a cool freshet of good will within her, and she spoke to Horace out of the aged, aching depths of her poor heart.

"Listen to me, Horace," she said to him. "Let's have no more nonsense between us. It wasn't any fault of yours that your mother made you the hook to hang so much unkindness on. It wasn't your fault that Maisie and I went to hell. Oh, don't look so shocked! That's just where we did go, and I went farther than Maisie, too! Maisie had a love affair and married a gambler, but I went into real estate and invented the kitchenette and the coöperative apartment house, and they're two of the worst crimes ever perpetrated against humanity."

"You're joking!" Horace cried, relieved that his elder sister had not made him a more roseate confession.

"Not entirely. The point is to avoid blaming and fussing now for what happened so long ago. Let's forget what father did in marrying your mother and what your mother did to Maisie and what Maisie did to me. Let's you and I be friends."

"I'm glad you're so sensible, Bessie," he said to her. "Steve Crandall was so afraid you wouldn't be."

Just the sound of Steve Crandall's name, and Miss Rideout's sensibleness came to a full stop, and a new ache came through the homesickness and complicated matters. "What matters now," she forced herself to say, "is what went on before Steve Crandall's misbehaviors."

He looked puzzled, she saw, though he said nothing.

"When we were children here," she explained, "Maisie and Steve and I. And now," she added, "take me in and introduce me to your wife. It was nice of you to let me come up, after all my years of churlishness, and see the old house once more. I shan't raise any objections to anything you want to do with it. I'll only look around and take my train back to New York."

At a little before three that afternoon a woman appeared in the streets of the town in which the Rideouts lived. She stood against the corner of an old house opposite the "Congo" Church and gazed about her in a faint timidity. Her attitude and her whole manner seemed to say: "All this is the same, but different. The curbstones are the same, but the people

are different. The houses are the same, but the streets are different. The doors are the same, but they're changed, too. Only, I mustn't let any of the changes affect me."

The rain ceased momentarily, and the clouds broke into masses of charcoal-soiled ivory that showed cobalt between. The wind blew gustily from the river and from the scarlet mallow patterns on the marshes of the Maine shore. The wind riffled the gutter puddles at the woman's feet and bore to her nostrils scents of wood smoke and rotting leaves, of baking and hot oilcloth, of lamps and pines and tar and the tide and lumber, the least tainted, all of them, by the slightest odor of the fish wharfs. The woman sniffed the scents like a dog and with a dog's ecstasy of recognition.

The wind appeared to revive her. She clutched, as it were, at its stimulus of recollected certainty and moved forward. No one noticed her. No traffic stopped for her. She did not pause for the crossings. She went straight on, like one resolved against looking to either hand.

When she had left the small business section behind her and turned into High Street, her puzzlemenet decreased and her assurance waxed correspondingly more assured. Under the arching, leafless elms her step quickened. She walked past one after another of the stately federal palaces of High Street until she came to the end, where the Rideout house, the stateliest of all, stood farthest back of all.

Here she paused again and stood quite still, and her eyes rested upon the house with all that can be human pain and love and marvel and tenderness in them. When she had taken her fill of looking she entered the Rideout gate, walked up the steps beneath the noble portico, and knocked, somehow impatiently.

It was the maid, Delia, who opened the door. "What do you want?" she asked of the woman.

"I want to come in, of course!"

Delia wondered, as much at the tone as at the words. Lovers of Georgian building were no novelty thereabouts, however. "You can't see the house to-day," she said. "You have to write ahead and make an application."

The woman said: "But I don't want to see the house. I want to come in." And she laughed weakly, in a surprised manner.

Delia drew back frightened. "Who is it you want to see?" she demanded.

"No one!" This time a little querulous authority came into the woman's voice. "Don't keep me standing here! It's raining."

The rain had, in truth, resumed. Delia's was a soft heart. Delia saw the rain and saw tears trembling in the woman's eyes. A real lady fallen on evil days, Delia decided, and dropped her formal, or door-bell, bearing.

"I don't believe you're feeling yourself, dearie," she said. "Come in, if you want to, and I'll give you a cup of hot tea."

Delia stepped aside to let the woman in. "She walked right past me"—so Delia subsequently reported to Mrs. Blenkinsopp, the cook—"as if she'd owned the place. If I hadn't caught her, she'd have been in the parlor in a jiffy with Mrs. Rideout and the fat sister from New York and everybody!"

Luckily Delia did catch her and led her away from the drawing room to the kitchen. There she provided the woman with a chair close to the stove. The woman made not the least resistance, but followed meekly and sat where she was told. Only she cried and cried and could not be made to stop.

Both Delia and Mrs. Blenkinsopp, the cook, found, in such carryings-on, good and sufficient excuse for exasperation. They were doing for their strange guest all that she had any right to ask of them. "What on earth has got into you?" Delia asked, a little bit impatiently.

"Nothing." The misery persisted, though, and twisted the features all up and made the words stick so that they came out all tight and hurting. "It's just that I didn't think you'd keep me in the kitchen!"

"Oh, didn't you, indeed!"

"No. I expected everybody would be much gladder to see me than they are."

Welcomed to Caroline's drawing room, Miss Elizabeth Rideout regained her self-possession and proceeded, along her own lines, to ingratiate herself. She had twice to be reminded of Caroline's name, and, after the second reminder, called her Evelyn, Eleanor, and Leonore in succession and without noticing. She sat back in her grandfather's wing chair and held the room at bay, a Barbarian empress putting Rome

in its place. "It's a charming house," she said. "A really noble house! And you've done surprisingly little to spoil it."

"We've tried to preserve it," Caroline informed her, a little coldly.

"They all do that." Miss Elizabeth smiled the smile of the unimpressed. "Only a house as fine as this can protect itself from being preserved out of existence. Not that your taste is bad. It may be faddy, but it is *not* bad."

Caroline thanked her for that crumb.

"Though you ought to be shot," the redoubtable lady wound up, "for putting electric lights in this room."

Caroline thanked her again and gave up any idea of protesting.

The redoubtable one was squinting with sudden malevolence toward the mantel. "Is that Horace's mother?" she wanted to know.

"It's the thing Sargent did of her," Horace replied, "the year before she died."

"Flatters her so I didn't recognize her," his sister rejoined; "though I never looked at her myself when I could avoid it."

Before she went upstairs she discovered the unearthed photographs of her sister and herself. As she struggled stupendously to her feet, she saw it on the mantel and lumbered over to take it in her hand. Such deep feeling flushed over her, as she studied it, that Horace thought her on the point of hurling it into the fire.

"Maisie and you," he stammered. "We thought you'd be pleased."

"Did you?" Grimly she put the picture back in its place and left them, and the old stair creaked under her ascent.

Natalie stated categorically that she was proud to be the niece of such a woman. "I adore Aunt Bessie!" she said. "I think she's superb. She may speak her mind out, but she loved this house, and that's more than some people I could mention do."

She summoned Roger over from next door. "The sooner you meet my aunt Bessie the better," she told him, "because after we're married you're going to see as much of her as she's willing to see of us."

Thus Miss Elizabeth, when she reappeared, found her niece's fiancé awaiting her, along with her niece and her

niece's parents, in the drawing room. She inspected Roger suspiciously. "I suppose you're Stephen Crandall's son?"

Roger acknowledged his identity.

"I was thinking about him coming up in the train. Tell him to come to see me while I'm here. He needn't be afraid."

"Thank you. He wants to see you, I know."

"Humph! I hope you don't take after him."

Then she realized how she must have startled the boy. "Don't mind me," she went on quickly. "I gave up manners long ago. I was fond of your father once, and he behaved badly about it. Coming back here has brought it all to life for me."

"So that's it!" Roger thought, and Miss Rideout asked herself what the devil there was about this place to stir her up, and tea was brought. She refused tea, demanded whisky, took the amusement of the room into her own capable hands, and began telling stories at her own expense. Things went handsomely from that point, under her direction.

It was in the kitchen, where the stranger lady sat, that things halted. The cook said: "Either she's sick or drunk or crazy."

"She!" Delia admonished. "You'll only make her worse, and I'm certain she's not drunk."

"Sick or crazy, then," Mrs. Blenkinsopp compromised, "and, whichever she is, we ought to have the doctor in."

Now Delia did not at all fancy calling in the doctor. She could hardly go that far without Mrs. Rideout's permission, and she made a fair guess at what her mistress would say to her for entertaining such a waif. "Drat my tender heart!" she whispered. "Drat the rain and her for looking so ladylike and pathetic!"

She tried her conception of the polite hint. "Hadn't we better be moving along now?" she inquired of the woman in her most persuasive manner.

"Moving along?" A despairing echo. "Why?"

"The rain's stopped, you know. And you can't stay here all night."

That same baffled moth of pathos flitted once more over the lips and speech. "Why can't I stay? I came to stay a long time. You mustn't put me out."

"Bless my soul!" Delia cried, and Mrs. Blenkinsopp threw her apron over her face, ran into the pantry, and locked the door.

"You don't understand," the woman persisted, "that I belong here."

"Don't I?" Delia was growing seriously alarmed.

"I was afraid you didn't."

Delia made up her mind and went for Mrs. Rideout.

It was a queer thing, altogether, in a company already queer enough in its own right, to have the housemaid walk in, as Delia did, blanched with fear, and ask for help with a lunatic in the kitchen. "She does nothing but cry," Delia reported, to the astonishment of the drawing room, "so I don't think she's dangerous. Only I dassn't put her out, or try it, with all those knives and cleavers lying about."

Roger volunteered. "If knives and cleavers are coming into action," he said to Horace, "I can dodge quicker than you could."

He went into the kitchen. When he came back—and he was gone only a very few minutes—he brought the woman with him. She stood in the door at his side, leaning upon his arm, and smiled a smile more touching than any tears.

"It wasn't that I minded being taken to the kitchen," she told them, hurrying her words out before any of them had a chance to speak. "I didn't mind one bit and they've been very kind to me out there. I may have felt a *little* hurt, but that was only natural, wasn't it, I mean, I *would* have wanted to have my tea in here with you. Don't you see?"

They stared at her, much more than dumbfounded by her extraordinary speech. They saw a woman, simply but most beautifully dressed, and with rare pearls at her throat. They saw hair of Indian summer artificially tinged with spring, and lips and cheeks that were not, by any means, innocent of rouge. They saw, as well, the tense gravity of a little girl in a face already aged and a body long since mature. The gravity was real, they saw—as real as it was tremulous and eager.

"She says she belongs here," Delia quavered.

"So I do!" the woman insisted. "I always did!"

"Do you know where you are?" Horace asked her.

"Of course I know!"

"And with whom?" Caroline pressed.

"Don't tease me any more, please!"

Then Roger put his oar in. "It occurred to me," he said, "the moment I saw her, that she might be quite right about belonging here. Are you sure this lady isn't your sister from Rome?" And, back to the woman, he added: "Are you Madame de Gondrecour?"

The woman shook her head. The others, too. All but Miss Elizabeth. Her voice died on her dry lips as she tried to speak. "Maisie! My little Maisie!"

"That's right," the woman answered her. "That's my name. I've come home at last."

She clung to that word and made it coo for them.

"Home . . . home . . . home . . ."

She made it clear, though, that she recognized none of them. She simply stood there, without one word more to say for herself, and turned her poor heart inside out with her still, intense joy in the house where she had been a child and a young girl.

Heaven only knew—as Caroline was later heard to observe—how long the shock of that introduction lasted. The prodigal daughter, come home in such fashion, after so long and so arduous an interval, laid a spell of silence upon them which it had been a sacrilege to break. At length, however, sunlight—the hearty gold of a late afternoon of rain—pushed in through the windows and bestirred life once more, and the family watched the happiness of that vacant face focus down upon a discreet pleasure in some immediate and palpable thing. The strain relaxed, and the watchers glanced furtively at one another. Then the shadow, in the image of Mary Rideout de Gondrecour, snatched them all back to her as she darted, suddenly, to the window.

"The sun's come out!" she cooed at them. "Shan't we be going, after all?"

"Going?" Caroline echoed. "Where?"

"Driving with Dan'l, of course!"

"Dan'l?"

Miss Elizabeth remembered, if Horace did not. "You were a baby in Dan'l's day," she whispered, "though he drove you often enough. Maisie and I used to take turns holding you, every fine afternoon, down the turnpike."

The prodigal daughter was rapping on the windowpane,

waving and calling: "Hello, Dan'l! Hello! How smart you look!"

Roger peered over her shoulder. "It's Joseph," he said to the rest. "Out there with the car waiting for orders."

"What must he think!" Caroline groaned out of her deep dread of servants' gossip. "This is dreadful."

Miss Elizabeth took the situation in hand. "Tell your chauffeur to drive us down the turnpike," she said to Caroline. "Tell your maid to fetch me my hat and coat. I'll take this business off young Crandall's shoulders and find out where we stand."

For a minute after the two had left and the car had driven off, the four of them, Natalie, her father and mother and her fiancé, stood quite still, listening.

"I could have sworn," Natalie said, as steadily as she was able, "that I heard horses outside."

"And I!" her mother quavered. "Horses and a carriage on a gravel, drive!"

"And I, too," Horace fell in, "though there has been neither carriage nor horses these twenty years."

"There will have been both," Roger said, "in Dan'l's day."

The hour Miss Elizabeth kept her sister driving was filled, for the family, with wild surmise, and for Horace, with shudders and mutterings of "How terrible! How terrible!" and the like. When they came home, Miss Elizabeth looked an exhausted specter, years older and stones lighter than at tea. She dropped into the wing chair, called loudly for more Scotch, flattened her two vast elbows on her knees, and pressed shaking hands to throbbing temples.

The prodigal, however, seemed to be picking up. She ran into the house like a girl and up the stairs. Natalie pursued her to watch over her. Presently Natalie returned to the drawing room to report.

"Wasn't my room hers once?" she asked them. "It must have been, because she went to it straight off and hung up her poor coat in my closet. Only her coat isn't poor, is it? Just being hers makes it seem so! And she saw my things on the dressing table and looked so surprised at them. She's sitting on my bed now—I suppose that was hers, too—smiling away to herself like a tired little girl!"

Her aunt Bessie cried out at her: "Will you stop it, child!

I've had an hour of her asking me where her sister is! And there I sat, and what on earth could I say to her? And she'd look out at old things and recognize them. I could see her. And when we came to new ones, houses and such that weren't there in her day and mine, I could see she was puzzled."

"Who does she take you to be?" Caroline demanded.

"Nobody much! People aren't real to her except as parts of this"—the thick, soft hands wavered off to indicate the four walls of the room—"or as memories *in* this."

"What do you make of it?" her brother asked her.

"What should I make of it! That her mind's gone, you fool! Or all of it since her childhood."

"All her life since it happened!" Horace supposed.

"It?" Roger fired at them. "What is 'it'?"

"Ah!" the old lady put him off. "You're the last one to be told that story. Let it go as a family row. A row complicated by all the uncharitable and unloving things we all do when our vanities get scorched. Let it go at that and leave the whole spiteful, wretched business to be forgotten!"

"It won't let us forget," said Horace, and added: "We used to call her 'Proud Maisie,' too!"

"Proud Maisie was in the wood,
Walking so early,"

Natalie quoted.

That was more than Miss Elizabeth could possibly bear.

"Don't, child!" she begged. "For the love of Heaven, have a little mercy on me!"

Caroline asked what was to be done.

"Psychiatrists," Roger hazarded, "would diagnose her case as amnesia." Would Miss Elizabeth place her in some good sanatorium or keep her at home with nurses? Those were the alternatives Roger saw.

"I'll take care of her," Miss Elizabeth assured them. "It's my job. She's my little sister. If she's mad, I'm at least partly to blame."

"She'll be a handful," Roger prophesied.

To Caroline's mind the only logical course was to call a doctor in at once. Caroline had no intention of putting up a lunatic, however pitiable, without sound medical advice on

the possible risk incurred. Caroline considered Roger's father the logical man.

"Not Steve Crandall!" Miss Elizabeth protested. "Anyone but Steve!"

"I can't agree with you," Caroline pressed her argument. "The past *is* the past if it does seem the present to us just now. If Maisie doesn't know you, she certainly won't know him. And how much more sensible to call in a doctor who is also a friend, who knows the whole story from the beginning, and who has such good reason for keeping things to himself."

"You must realize," Roger backed Caroline up, "that people in Madame de Gondrecour's condition are often recalled to themselves."

"I won't admit that she's really mad!" Miss Elizabeth said.

"You'll admit, though, that she isn't herself?"

"I'll have to do that."

So Caroline won her point and scuttled over to the Crandall house next door to lay the situation before Dr. Crandall.

Much as that gentleman had dreaded Miss Elizabeth's advent, he had thanked his stars that he was, at any rate, to be spared Maisie. "Frankly, Caroline," he confessed, "I could wish you had called in any other medical man on earth. There's something almost fateful in this. Our old sins have a way of coming home to roost, I suppose. I see your point in choosing me. I'll come along with you and have a look at her."

He did come and, in the drawing room, encountered Miss Elizabeth, braced to receive him. "Well, Stephen," she said to him, "here's a pretty business for you and me to have tumbling about our ears at our time of life."

"'Old, unhappy, far-off things,'" the doctor began, and stopped like an actor who has forgotten his lines, and bowed his head.

"Bring Maisie down," Horace commanded. "Let Stephen see her in here."

All the time that this controversy had raged in her honor, the woman who had been Maisie Rideout sat on the bed in her girlhood's room and played listless games with the curtains and the wall paper. After she had done with the parrots and polka dots about the casement, she painstakingly proved,

with regard to the wall paper, that she required seven Chinese garden scenes to get from the floor to the ceiling if she went diagonally, whereas she could do it vertically in four. Then she made patterns in the wall paper: a square with two scenes to a side, another with three, and a huge one with four. She made a triangle and a six-pointed star.

She turned her attention to the window. Sitting up quite erect, she could see the bird house in the fork of the wineglass elm outside. When she lay over on her cheek the bird house dropped below the sill. When she sat up again it climbed back to its proper level. By bending forward and backward she could move it from pane to pane.

Thoughts followed one another through her sick mind like crinkled images in a green mirror: sweeping the garden paths with her particular broom; thin horses; the hole in the privet hedge; slipping down between bales of hay in the barn loft; "The Little Match Girl" and "The Culprit Fay"; watering the garden (you needed a hose for that but no water); playing "Horatius on the Bridge" with a plank laid across the brook and falling off and getting soaked; a doll named "Happiness" who fell into the brook and got soaked; the house in the hedge and the cellar that was not under the house in the hedge, except pretending; and raspberries and yellow crayons and bare feet. They had neither reminiscence nor immediacy in them, her thoughts, but shifted, merely, with the weary stateliness of the mind's music that has no tune to it. They had no more quality than the mind's music. Thought does not need much quality to be no more than thought. Like life, thought may exist with equal right, both as great gods and as filmy and impalpable little fishes in the stream of perpetual consciousness.

When Natalie came to find her, to fetch her down to Dr. Crandall and the others, the thought of supper rose idly above all other thoughts. The simple fact of being summoned so, in the darkness that had descended upon the lemon-yellow fading of the day, brought the idea, supper, to her mind, habitually, if not hungrily. And, as old habit frees an idea of intention and leaves it only the mechanism of gesture, she commenced to make vague motions toward freshening her appearance.

"You look quite all right, you know," Natalie gently

hurried her. "Just come as you are. They're all waiting for you."

She went down obediently, turning on the stairs to make sure that Natalie was coming, too. "I didn't hear the gong," she apologized, as she stepped into the drawing room. She smiled all the way around the circle of their faces, as candidly upon Dr. Crandall as upon any other. One would have said she hoped they would spare her her scolding.

Dr. Crandall had got off to a bad start with Miss Elizabeth, and this apparition of Maisie did not improve matters with him. What little remained to him of his medical authority deserted him when he saw Maisie, and he forgot every word he had planned to say. "Maisie," he stammered, "you and I were in love once. Awfully in love. You with me and I with you. In Vienna. I'm Steve Crandall. Don't you remember me?"

A slow, incredulous smile spread over the prodigal's face. Dr. Crandall watched it, and Roger watched it. Roger watched his father pull the handkerchief from his breast pocket and carefully wipe the corners of his mouth and his hands. Roger knew that his father was taking refuge in a medical mannerism for want of anything better to do. Something about the scene upset the boy. With an impulse of disgusted self-conciousness he motioned his fellow spectators out of the room, closed the door after himself and them, and left his father and Nathaniel Rideout's daughters alone together.

Thus none of them heard the little girl in Maisie Rideout's image make her astounding answer. "I never married Steve Crandall," she said. "I do wish you'd tell my sister Bessie that."

"This is a most extraordinary case," the doctor said. "The most extraordinary that has ever come my way."

"We're in for it now," Elizabeth answered him, and they buckled down to the task of recalling the lost soul to herself.

The problem turned out quite differently, however, from their anticipation of it. The lost soul turned the tables on them. Before five minutes of their interview had passed she proved to them that they had no need to recall her to herself, that she knew already all there was to know about her story and

her identity, and that their real task lay in recalling themselves to her. At this they failed completely. Step by step they built up for her the dismal, hectic structure of her life, and she permitted them to build it. Not one fact did she question or greet with any symptom of surprise. What they asked of her she told them, and yet they got nowhere with her. She never evinced the faintest interest in what she had to say nor gave any faint sign of recognizing either one of her examiners. She did not even appear to doubt their right to examine her, but patiently answered query after query, for all the world like any well-mannered little girl who knows what to expect of grown-ups and what grown-ups expect of her.

Miss Elizabeth's staying power failed early in the game. "I can't bear this," she said. "I'm too old for this sort of thing. She hasn't an idea of who I am and, worse than that, she doesn't care!"

"We've got to break through, though!" the doctor insisted. "Now we've started, we've got to break through if we can, if only to tell her that we understand, at last, that we love her and that we want so much to be forgiven by her."

They struggled on, but she resisted recognition of them with what seemed like nothing so much as a stubborn and remote distaste, and always with the same refrain: "What do Steve Crandall and Vienna matter now? What does any of that matter now?" Sometimes, she corrected them. Sometimes she amplified their memories and told them facts about her story and their own, facts they had never suspected. And always passively and with that marveling sweetness that only children have or sainted innocents.

"The baby was born in Carlsbad," she told them in answer to one of the doctor's questions. "Didn't you know about that? It was just after Ramon married me. I always thought it was nice of him to marry me as he did just when I was going to have another man's baby. I went to Carlsbad when I left Steve in Vienna, and I stayed there all the time my stepmother was pretending to look for me, and Ramon took care of me. Ramon loved the baby and took her death just as hard as I did. She died in Dresden when she was ten months old. We were living in Dresden then. Ramon got in trouble there, playing baccarat with the King of Saxony, two days

after she died, and we had to go away and leave her there in her little grave. Ramon saved my life then. He had his faults. But they were a Latin's faults, and Ramon was a great gentleman."

Her story submerged them in wave upon wave of listless iciness until the doctor's voice faded to a whisper and Elizabeth cowered at the dark roots of her own soil. Her story told them how cruel a thing is anger and how weak a thing suspicion, and set them right where they had gone wrong thirty years before, and shamed Elizabeth for three decades of injustice and stripped the doctor and revealed him for what in truth he pitiably was. "If only Bessie would understand," she said, out of some long-endured regret, "that I didn't want to steal her beau and that I never meant to go so far, she wouldn't feel so badly against me. Won't you tell her I refused to marry Steve, even when he begged me to, even for the baby's sake? If only Bessie would understand that!" And then the refrain: "But it's too late now. It doesn't matter now."

"But, Maisie!" her sister moaned. "How was I to know? You promised me, and yet you did go to Vienna, and you did take him away from me!"

"It's too late now," the lost soul rigidly spoke on. "It doesn't matter now. Only I never meant to go to Vienna. I was taken there and thrown in his way. Bessie might have guessed that much, knowing what she knew."

"That's so," the doctor muttered. "It doesn't excuse me, but it *is* so. It's the story of the wicked stepmother over again.

"What happened was what she meant to have happen. She meant Maisie to come between you and me, Bessie. She meant to make the two of you hate one another."

Elizabeth raised haggard eyes to the Sargent portrait of that dead demon her father married. "And, God forgive her," she said, "things turned out as she planned."

The lost soul shook her head and smiled at them. "No," she protested, "I never hated Bessie. I was only sorry she didn't understand. But it's too late now. It doesn't matter now."

Having learned so much and failed so thoroughly, they went in to supper at last. The candles shone on the white old silver, and the dining room smelled of pineapple and beans. Maisie sat down by Horace and bowed her head. They all fell

in, and Horace spoke the grace the dining room had not heard since his father died.

Through all the meal she sat and never spoke except as good little girls may speak, briefly and in polite reply. She touched no food at all, though they pressed food upon her. When coffee came she asked to be excused.

"I'll wait in the blue sitting room," she said. "I haven't been in there yet since I . . . ."

"Since?" Roger picked her up.

"Since ever so long," she answered him, and made her courtesy and went out.

Roger turned to ask if they had seen that courtesy. Their faces told him he had no need to ask. Roger said: "Would you mind explaining to Natalie and me? We've heard so much, we've a right to know. And it isn't for us to guess."

"Nor for us to tell," Horace put him off. "It doesn't matter now."

"That's her refrain," the doctor cried, and buried his stricken head in his two hands and shook for the awfulness of its mattering so much.

Said Miss Elizabeth: "I'll tell him if you won't. There was a stepmother—"

"Please, Bessie!" Horace begged.

"—a wicked stepmother who had a son she loved, and two stepdaughters whom she loathed, and who loathed her with interest. Only the odd thing was that her son loathed her, too, and feared her, and adored his sisters. And for that she punished them, divided them, and drove them both out of her way forever."

"How?" Roger pressed her.

"They loved the same man, those girls did, and they'd made a bargain to let him choose between them. And whichever one he chose, it was agreed, the other was to keep hands off. You see, they knew how weak he was. They loved him, but they knew how weak he was."

Roger glanced toward his father and kept his peace.

"But when he chose the elder, then the stepmother saw her chance. She took the younger one abroad with her. To ease the blow, she said. She took her to Vienna, where the young man was, and when things had gone to suit her, turned the poor girl adrift and came home to tell lies the elder sister

was disloyal enough to believe. That's why you're not my son, Roger. That's why I've kept so long away from here. That's why my sister has come home as you see her."

"And now?" Roger asked.

"Ah, now!" she rallied. "There isn't much more now. I buy this house from Horace and keep Maisie here at peace until she dies."

"I see," said Horace.

They got up from the table and went into the blue room to look for Maisie. She was not there. The electric lights had been turned off, and all the candles were ablaze. Maisie's work, clearly, they recognized. Maisie's harking back to the past. But no Maisie.

They called her through the house. No answer. No sign of Maisie in the house or in the long garden, when they dodged with lanterns through the shrubbery, nor in the barn nor in the street.

Panic consumed them to think of her astray and in her state. They organized a search with the car, with all the servants, with the police, and still no Maisie. Only one clue could they discover. A figure answering to the description they gave had been seen wandering along the beaches and among the dunes. Perhaps the tide will tell the tale, they thought.

At about midnight a boy brought a radiogram in upon their exhausted bafflement. They were all of them in the drawing room, and Horace opened it.

"Don't sell," it read. "I'm coming home." It was signed "Maisie." It was dated from the *Berengaria* at sea.

Caroline did not understand. None of them understood. Miss Elizabeth heard her teeth chattering in her head and wondered numbly what made such a sound. Roger lifted the message from Horace's numb fingers.

"Does that mean," Natalie faltered, "that she wasn't Aunt Maisie after all? Because if Aunt Maisie sent that radio, she couldn't have been here to-day."

The doctor and Miss Elizabeth both knew better than that. They knew much better than that. "Still," said Miss Elizabeth, stunned and incredulous, "it might be that Maisie's died at sea and that we've seen——"

"No," Roger cut her off. "No ghosts, Miss Rideout. At least, no spirits of the dead."

"What do you mean?" they asked him.

"This radio was sent at five," he said. "At five our time. That's a good hour after she put in her appearance here."

"Well?" Miss Elizabeth looked quickly up at him.

"Oh, there'd be living things to account for this. Living things ever so much stronger than death could be."

Miss Elizabeth nodded. "Very like," she said. "If homesickness could tear me from New York, it might easily have brought Maisie here from Rome. Or from midocean."

"To meet you here," said Roger.

"Bless the boy!" The old woman put forth a hand to clutch at Roger's. "There's kindness and understanding in him, or he wouldn't have said that last. We all of us go back to our real times. For Maisie and me. our childhood in this house was our real time."

"Maisie has been here," Horace said, "and Maisie's coming. What will she be like, I wonder?"

"Happy again, perhaps," his sister ventured.

None of them, though, had the wit to turn, then, out to the flying stair in the dark hallway. Had they turned then they might have seen, not one, but two little girls, climbing up, step by step, dragging their chins along the banister, saying, so dutifully: "Good-night . . . good-night . . . good-night . . . ."

HIM AND HER

BY KATHARINE BRUSH

FROM *Collier's*

KATHARINE BRUSH

is the author of two novels, "Glitter" and "Little Sins," and many short stories for the leading American and British magazines. The title story of her recent collection, "Night Club," is perhaps her most famous. It has appeared in several anthologies and has been made into a "talkie."

SHE'S twelve years older than he is," Delia said. "She's forty-four and he's thirty-two. Here, let me give you a piece of this lemon meringue pie."

"Oh, no, Delia. No, thanks. I'm full up."

"Just this much."

"We-ell. It looks awful good."

"It is good," said Delia. "I made it this morning."

Deftly, on a knife, she transferred a triangle of lemon custard topped with meringue to her visitor's plate, where it lay among cake crumbs. "*They* liked it," she added. "He ate two pieces. He likes my cooking, anyway."

"You're a fine cook," the visitor said. "You always was, Delia."

Delia, putting the rest of the pie away, nodded matter-of-factly.

The visitor took up her fork. "Well. Go on. You was tellin' me." She detached a section of custard and crust, conveyed it to her mouth, and continued thickly: "Twelve years older, you say?"

"Yeah."

"She is? Or he is?"

"*She* is."

"My," said the guest. "That's a lot for the lady to be older." She added curiously, "How do you know she is?"

Delia slammed a cupboard door. "Well, for one thing—I got eyes in my head to see with. And for another thing, I know. I've heard 'em talking."

"Talkin' about how old they are?"

"Sort of," said Delia. "Sometimes they fight about it. Or *she* fights about it. He don't say anything, except to tell her she's wrong."

"Wrong?"

"Oh, she keeps telling him she knows he wishes she was younger, and he says she's wrong. He says he don't wish

anything of the kind, he never thinks about it at all, he says. But she keeps on telling him and telling him.

"He's a lovely man," Delia added irrelevantly. "Have another bite of pie, Jenny?"

Jenny shook her head emphatically. "It was awful good. But I couldn't, really."

Delia took the plate and fork to the sink and let hot water run on them. She reached for a dish towel. In the meantime her guest brushed crumbs from the table into the palm of a reddened hand, went to the open window, and fluttered the hand in the air.

"There!" Delia said.

"All through now, are you?"

"Yeah."

The kitchen was immaculate. Delia surveyed it, rolling down her black poplin sleeves, fastening the organdie cuffs at the wrists. "All through in here," she said. "I got to turn down the beds yet."

Her glance returned to her friend. "Like to see the rest of the apartment?"

Jenny would indeed.

They went through the swinging door, Delia in the lead. "This is the dining room."

"My, it's grand, ain't it!"

Delia nodded indifferently. "I guess so. I got so used to it I forget if it is or if it isn't." She appended, "This rug's the mischief to keep clean. It marks if you look at it."

"Chairs are beautiful."

"She brought 'em from Spain."

"Is she Spanish?"

"No, but she's been there. She lived there a whole year once," Delia said. "She and her first husband. He was sick, that's why they went there. Harry, his name was. Harry somebody. Rich fella.

"He died," Delia concluded casually. "Died of consumption. This is the living room."

A fluffy dog descended from a chair and came to meet them.

"Get away, you," said Delia.

Jenny giggled. "What kind of a dog do you call that?"

"That's a chow."

"It looks like a little lion."

"It's a pest," said Delia. "It's name is Ming Toy." She made a grimace, quick, eloquent. "It's hers," she said further. "Of course, *he* wouldn't give it house room."

The visitor was eying her surroundings. "Beautiful," she sighed.

"This was just done over," Delia said. "Just this fall. Some decorator did it from Madison Avenue. Cost four thousand dollars, this room did."

"You don't say!"

They stood for some moments more, gazing about them.

"And in here," said Delia, starting forward suddenly, "is the lib'ary. See, it's all books."

Jenny followed at her heels. Side by side they stared in from the threshold.

"Doctors' books," suggested Jenny. "He's a doctor, ain't he?"

"Specialist," Delia corrected her. "Ears, nose, and throat. But these aren't those kind of books. He keeps those kind downtown where his office is—anyway, I never saw but one or two around here. These here are just—you know—books to read."

"Surely are enough of 'em."

"He likes books," Delia said. "He don't get much chance to read, though, when she's around. She keeps him hopping, believe me! Out every night they don't have company come in, and that's the way it goes.

"You see," explained Delia, switching off the light and turning back into the living room, "she's afraid that he's going to think she's old if she says she wants to just sit home an evening and rest herself. So she has to make out like she's dying for excitement, to show him how young an' frisky she is."

"Is that so?"

"Yeah. So all day she rests up and has massages all over. And then when it's time for him to come home she dolls up like Astor's pet horse and tells him to hurry up and get dressed too, and she fixes a shaker of cocktails with her very own lily-white hands"—Delia grimaced again—"and they drink 'em, and away they go.

"It's a shame," concluded Delia, wagging her head. "Some-

times I feel so sorry for him I could just *bawl*. This here's her room. Stand still while I turn on a light."

Jenny stood still. Delia bustled into the gloom and found and pressed a tiny button under a bonnetlike pink taffeta lampshade. "She's only got soft lights in here, believe me," Delia said.

"How does she see to dress, I wonder."

"Dresses in her dressing room. I'll show you that in a minute. Come on in!" directed Delia. "Don't be afraid. They won't be back for a long time yet; they've gone to the theater. And Germaine's out too. Germaine, that's her personal maid. She's always out in the evenings, Germaine is. She has it soft. Come *in!* Don't stand there."

Jenny came in and stood in the center of the room, clutching her pocketbook and peering about her. "Land!" she said. "Look at the pillows."

Delia was taking them off the bed, bestowing them by the armful upon the taffeta *chaise longue* beside the windows. Innumerable small pillows, elaborate, lacy, plump, like grown-up pincushions grown soft with age. Heart-shaped ones, oval ones, square ones. "Ever see the beat?" asked Delia disgustedly. "Every night I do this. Nineteen of 'em, there are."

"There's another on the floor. Big one."

Delia's glance at it spoke volumes. "That *belongs* there," she snorted.

The coverlet of satin seen pinkly through lace Delia peeled from the bed. She turned down the blankets and the spotless linen sheet that had a curly monogram over the hem. From somewhere she brought mules with smooth gold linings and high gold heels, and a dressing gown like an evening wrap of cloth-of-gold and chiffon. And a chiffon nightgown like a dress for dancing school grown long.

Jenny was speechless.

"There!" said Delia. "Come on, now. I'll show you in here."

The dressing room had windows on one side, doors and cupboards and drawers along the other. A dressing table in taffeta ruffles stood at the end. Delia opened a door with a sweeping gesture. "Take a look," she said succinctly.

Jenny gasped. "Looks like a *store!*"

"Don't it, though?"

Delia moved into the closet and unhooked one of the gowns, held it up and regarded it fondly. "This is one I like," she said. "I got my eyes on this, believe me."

"It's grand," Jenny agreed reverently.

Delia hung it in place again and took down another. "This green one too." She twisted her wrist, exhibiting the back; then hung that gown up also. "I'll never get 'em, though," she sighed. "She don't give me anything to speak of. She says, 'It's too bad my things won't fit you, Delia'—and then she takes 'em down to a secondhand place and sells 'em. She makes me sick!" Delia exploded peevishly.

"Tch!" Jenny said with her tongue against the roof of her mouth. "With all their money! My, my!"

"All *her* money, you mean," said Delia. "That's just it. If it hadn't been for her money, she'd never of got him. She was a widow, you see, and—— Sit down, Jenny. Rest your feet a minute."

They both sat down.

Delia leaned forward. "Well, as I was saying—it was like this: She was a rich widow, and she got sick. She got a mastoid —you know—like Mrs. Delaney's little boy had that time? Well, so they took her to the hospital—and there *he* was. He was an interne, see? What they call an interne, in this ears, nose, and throat hospital. Well. She fell in love with him."

Delia paused. Jenny nodded owlishly, lips compressed.

"Right off the bat!" continued Delia. "I've heard 'em talk about it. She's always telling him about it, like he didn't know. Seems he came in one day in a white coat and white pants to listen to her heart, and she fell for him"—Delia snapped her fingers—"just like that."

"Love at first sight, like," contributed Jenny.

"Yeah. Like that. Well," went on Delia, "there he was. He'd just got out of a doctors' college, and he was working in this hospital for the experience, like they have to do. He didn't have any money, and he didn't know how he was going to get started or get a practice—you know, an office, and patients——

"How I know this part," Delia interrupted herself to explain, "is that one night when she was away I heard him and a friend of his, another doctor, Dr. Rogers his name is, talking. I was in the dining room clearing off the table, and they were

in the living room having their coffee—they were talking kind of low, and I didn't get all of it—but it seemed this Dr. Rogers, he's his best friend, was asking him, confidential, why he ever married her when she was so much older and all. So he was telling him how it was.

"Seems he was a poor boy to begin with, and he was helping his two sisters, along with everything else, and he had borrowed the money for his schooling and didn't know how he was going to pay that back, let alone make enough to get ahead. So when she came along and got so crazy about him he figured that here was his chance.

"He didn't say much," declared Delia defensively. "And he tried to speak nice of her too—you know, like he was grateful to her for all she'd done for him. He didn't say anything against her—and he wouldn't let Dr. Rogers say anything. He kept telling Dr. Rogers not to blame her for anything, that it was all his own fault, and like that. It seemed like this Dr. Rogers was trying to get him to leave her. You know, divorce her, or get her to divorce him, or something. But he wouldn't hear of it at all—he didn't get mad, I don't mean, but he just kept telling Dr. Rogers that it wouldn't do, he couldn't think of it, he'd made his bed——"

"Divorce her what for?" Jenny interrupted breathlessly.

"Well, he—this other doctor—he said she was ruining him. And so she is!" Delia added emphatically. "What with late hours, and picking on him all the time, and not letting him have the nurses he wants for his office, and being jealous of his lady patients——"

"Is she? Jealous of his lady patients?"

"Is she!" cried Delia. "And the nurses too. He had one nurse she threw a fit about. Miss Fielding, her name was. I saw her once, time I had my swollen glands and he had me come down there. Pretty little thing she was. Young and awful smart. He said she was the best nurse he ever had, but she made him get rid of her."

"Well—do you think—" here Jenny also leaned forward, and her voice became a half whisper—"do you think there was anything *to* it?"

Delia shook her head. "No," she said flatly. "Wasn't a thing to it, just her suspicioning. I know, because he told Dr. Rogers. He said he couldn't help what he felt, but he said he

could help what he *did*. And he said he'd been faithful to her and he hoped he could keep on being." Delia hesitated. "He said it was 'cricket.'"

"Said it was what?"

"'Cricket.'"

They exchanged a puzzled glance.

"I thought maybe you'd know," Delia murmured.

"No."

"Well. Anyway. That's what he said."

"How long've they been married?" Jenny inquired.

"Four years. Four or five years. I don't just know how long exactly." Delia's voice lacked interest in this particular point. "He's making money now, all right, I guess," she went on. "Not as much as she's got, of course, but—some. He pays for this apartment, for instance. She owns all the stuff, but he pays the rent."

"The stuff's nicer'n the apartment, seems to me," Jenny remarked.

Delia was loyal. "Oh, I don't know, now! Rents are awful high in this part of town."

"That's right too."

"He's spending all he makes," Delia said, "I know that. Throwing it all in with what she spends. He tries to pay half the running expenses, but she spends so much he can't, and he's always trying to get her to cut down. He wants to save some, you see, to pay her back for all she spent helping him in the beginning. But he'll never do it. Not with her extravagant like she is. I tell you what *I* think." Delia's eyes narrowed craftily. "I think she don't *want* him to pay her back. I think she's afraid if he ever got it all paid he'd think, 'Well, that's that,' and go off and leave her. So she keeps him in debt all the time, so he never can."

There was a brief pause.

"Did you notice his picture?" queried Delia. "On the stand beside her bed?"

Jenny hadn't.

"Come on, I'll show you."

They moved back into the bedroom, leaving the dressing room dark behind them. Delia picked up the photograph in its heavy silver frame and handed it proudly to Jenny. "That's him."

"He sure is handsome!"

"He's handsomer than that, even," Delia said. "That don't do him justice. He's got the bluest eyes you ever saw, blue as—I don't know what.

"There's a picture of her in his room," Delia said, "if you'd like to see it. I got to go in there anyway, I didn't turn down his bed yet."

"They got separate rooms," Jenny observed as they filed out.

"Sure," said Delia. "You don't think she'd let him see her asleep, do you? With wrinkle plasters on, and a chin strap, and gloves?"

"My, my," Jenny said.

"This is his room. And that's her, over there on the chiffo-robe."

Jenny approached the chifforobe.

"She's nice lookin'," she said presently. "She don't look so terribly old."

"She don't, eh?" said Delia tersely. "You ought to see her."

Another silence. Only Delia's hands, spanking the pillows into plumpness, made sound.

"Her eyes look so—so sort of sad," Jenny said hesitantly. "Or—not sad, exac'ly but——"

Delia did not speak.

"I feel kinda sorry for her," Jenny said queerly, abruptly. "Too, I mean. Sorry for her too."

"You're crazy!"

"Well—I——"

"Sorry for *her ?*" Delia demanded incredulously, hands on hips.

"We-el——" Jenny's momentary allegiance died hard. But it died. "Maybe not," she said slowly. "Maybe not."

ALICE

BY SHERWOOD ANDERSON

FROM *Harper's Bazar* under title, "Beauty"

SHERWOOD ANDERSON

one of America's most distinguished men of letters, needs no introduction here. Of his many books, probably "Dark Laughter," "Poor White," "Triumph of the Egg," and "Winesburg, Ohio" are the best known.

THERE is a great deal of talk made about beauty, but no one defines it. It clings to some people.

Among women, now. The figure is something, of course, the face, the lips, the eyes. The way the head sets on the shoulders.

The way a woman walks across the room may mean everything.

I myself have seen beauty in the most unexpected places. What has happened to me must have happened also to a great many other men.

I remember a friend I had formerly in Chicago. He had something like a nervous breakdown and went down into Missouri—to the Ozark Mountains, I think.

One day he was walking on a mountain road and passed a cabin. It was a poor place with lean dogs in the yard.

There were a great many dirty children, a slovenly woman, and one young girl. The young girl had gone from the cabin to a wood pile in the yard. She had gathered an armful of wood and was walking toward the house.

There in the road was my friend. He looked up and saw her.

There must have been something—the time, the place, the mood of the man. Ten years later he was still speaking of that woman, of her extraordinary beauty.

And there was another man. He was from central Illinois and was raised on a farm. Later he went to Chicago and became a successful lawyer out there. He was the father of a large family.

The most beautiful woman he ever saw was with some horse traders that passed the farm where he lived as a boy. When he was in his cups one night he told me that all of his night dreams were concerned with her. He said he thought it was the way she walked. The odd part of it was that she had a bruised eye. Perhaps, he said, she was the wife or the mistress of one of the horse traders.

It was a cold day, and she was barefooted. The road was muddy. The horse traders, with their wagon, followed by a

lot of bony horses, passed the field where the young man was at work. They did not speak to him. You know how such people stare.

And then she came along the road alone.

It may have been another case of a rare moment for that man.

He had some sort of tool in his hand, a corn-cutting knife, he said. The woman looked at him. The horse traders looked back. They laughed. The woman may have sensed what the moment meant to him. The corn-cutting knife dropped from his hand. Women must know when they register like that.

And thirty years later she was still registering.

All of which brings me to Alice. Alice used to say the whole problem of life lay in getting past what she called the "times between."

I wonder where Alice is. She was a stout woman who had once been a singer. Then she lost her voice.

When I knew her she had blue veins over her red cheeks and short gray hair. She was the kind of woman who can never keep her stockings up. They were always falling down over her shoes.

She had stout legs and broad shoulders and had grown mannish as she grew older.

Such women can manage. Being a singer of some fame once, she had made a great deal of money. She spent money freely.

For one thing, she knew a great many very rich men, bankers and others.

They took her advice about their daughters and sons. A son of such a man got into trouble. Well, he got mixed up with some woman, a waitress or a servant. The man sent for Alice. The son was resentful and determined.

The girl might be all right and then again . . .

Alice took the girl's part. "Now, you look here," she said to the banker. "You know nothing about people. Those who are interested in people do not get rich as you have.

"And you do not understand your son either. This affair he has got into. His finest feelings may be involved in this matter."

Alice simply swept the banker, and perhaps his wife, out of the picture. "You people." She laughed when she said that.

Of course the son was immature. Alice did really seem to

know a lot about people. She took the son in hand—went to see the girl.

She had been through dozens of such experiences. For one thing, the boy wasn't made to feel a fool. Sons of rich men, when they have anything worth while in them, go through periods of desperation, like other young men. They go to college, read books.

Life in such men's houses is something pretty bad. Alice knew about all that. The rich man may go off and get himself a mistress—the boy's mother a lover. Those things happen.

Still the people are not so bad. There are all sorts of rich men, just as there are poor and middle-class men.

After we became friends, Alice used to explain a lot of things to me. At that time I was always worried about money. She laughed at me. "You take money too seriously." she said.

"Money is simply a way of expressing power," she said. "Men who get rich understand that. They get money, a lot of it, because they aren't afraid of it.

"The poor man or the middle-class man goes to a banker timidly. That will never do.

"If you have your own kind of power, show your hand. Make the man fear you in your own field. For example, you can write. Your rich man cannot do that. It is quite all right to exercise your own power. Have faith in yourself. If it is necessary to make him a little afraid, do so. The fact that you can do so, that you can express yourself, makes you seem strange to him. Suppose you uncoverd his life. The average rich man has got his rotten side and his weak side.

"And, for heaven's sake, do not forget that he has his good side, too.

"You may go at trying to understand such a one like a fool, if you want to—I mean with all sorts of preconceived notions. You could show just his rottenness, a distorted picture, ruin his vanity.

"Your poor man, your merchant or lawyer. Such men haven't the temptations as regards women, for example, that rich men have. There are plenty of women grafters about—some of them are physically beautiful, too.

"The poor man or the middle-class man goes about condemning the rich man for the rotten side of his life, but what rottenness is there in him?

"What secret desires has he, what greeds buried under a placid, commonplace face?"

In the matter of the rich man's son and the woman he had got involved with, Alice in some way did get at the bottom of things.

I gathered that in such affairs she took it for granted people were on the whole better than others thought them or than they thought themselves. She got further with it than you would have ever thought possible.

It may be that Alice really had brains. I have met few people enough I thought had.

Most people are so one-sided, so specialized. They can make money, or fight prize fights or paint pictures, or, if they are men who are physically attractive, can get women who are physically beautiful, women who can tie men up in knots.

Or they are just plain dubs. There are plenty of dubs everywhere.

Alice swept dubs aside, she did not bother with them. She could be as cruel as a cold wind.

She got money when she wanted it. She lived around in fine houses.

Once she got a thousand dollars for me. I was in New York and broke. One day I was walking on Fifth Avenue. You know how a writer is when he cannot write. Months of that for me. My money gone. Everything I wrote was dead.

I had grown a little shabby. My hair was long, and I was thin.

Lots of times I have thought of suicide when I cannot write. Every writer has such times.

Alice took me to a man in an office building. "You give this man a thousand dollars."

"What the devil, Alice? What for?"

"Because I say so. He can write, just as you can make money. He has talent. He is discouraged now, is on his uppers. He has lost his pride in life, in himself. Look at the poor fool's lips trembling."

It was quite true. I was in a bad state.

In me a great surge of love, for Alice. Such a woman! She became beautiful to me.

She was talking to the man.

"The only value I can be to you is now and then when I do something like this."

"Like what?"

"When I tell you where and how you can use a thousand dollars and use it sensibly.

"To give it to a man who is as good as yourself, who is better. When he is down—when his pride is low."

Alice came from the mountains of East Tennessee. You would not believe it. When she was twenty-four, at the height of her power as a singer, she had seemed tall. The reason I speak of it was that when I knew her she appeared short—and thick.

Once I saw a photograph of her when she was young.

She was half vulgar, half lovely.

She was a mountain woman who could sing. An older man, who had been her lover, told me that at twenty-four and until she was thirty she was like a queen.

"She walked like a queen," he said. To see her walk across a room or across the stage was something not to be forgotten.

She had lovers, a dozen of them in her time.

Then she had a bad period—for two years she drank and gambled.

Her life had apparently become useless to her, and she tried to throw it away.

But people who believe in themselves make others believe. Men who had been lovers of Alice never forgot her. They never went back on her.

They said she gave them something. She was sixty when I knew her.

Once she took me up to the Adirondacks. We went together in a big car with a Negro driver to a house that was half a palace. It took us two days to get up there.

The whole outfit belonged to some rich man.

It was a time when Alice said she was flat. "I gave you something once when you were flat, now come with me," she had said when she saw me in New York.

She did not mean flat as regards money. She was spiritually flat.

So we went and stayed alone together in a big house. There were servants there. That had been provided for. I don't know how.

We had been there a week, and Alice had been silent. One evening we went to walk.

It was in a wild country. There was a lake before the house and a mountain at the back.

It was a chilly night with a clear sky and a moon, and we walked in a country road.

Then we began to climb the mountain. I can remember Alice's thick legs and her stockings coming down.

She was short-winded, too. She kept stopping to puff and blow.

We plowed on silently like that. Alice, at herself, was seldom silent.

We got clear to the top of the mountain before she spoke.

She talked about what flatness is, how it hits people—floors them. Houses gone all flat, people all flat, life flat. "You think I'm courageous." she said. "The devil with that. I haven't the courage of a mouse."

We sat down on a stone, and she began to tell me of her life. It was an odd, complex story, told in that way, in little jerks by an old woman.

There it was, the whole thing. She had come down out of the Tennessee mountains as a young girl to the city of Nashville, in Tennessee.

She got in with a singing master there who knew she could sing. "Well, I took him as a lover. He wasn't so bad."

The man spent money on her, he interested some Nashville rich man.

That man also may have been her lover. Alice did not say. There were plenty of others.

One of them—he must have amounted to less than any of the others—she had loved.

She said he was a young poet. There was something crooked in him. He did sneaking things.

That was when she was past thirty and he was twenty-five. She lost her head, she said, and of course lost him.

It was then she went to drinking, gambled, went broke. She declared she lost him because she loved him too much.

"But why wasn't he any good? Why did you have to love that sort?"

She did not know why. It had happened.

It must have been an odd experience in the life of such a

strong person. It may have been the experience that had tempered her.

But I was speaking of beauty in people, what an odd thing it is, how it appears, disappears, and reappears.

I got a glimpse of Alice that night.

It was when we were coming back to the house, from the mountain, down the road.

We were on a hillside, and stout Alice was in front. There was a muddy stretch of road and then a wood and then an open space.

The moonlight was in the open space, and I was in the woods, in the darkness of the wood, but a few steps behind.

She crossed the open space ahead of me and there it was.

The thing lasted but a fleeting second. I think that all of the rich powerful men Alice had known, who had given her money, helped her when she needed help, and who have got so much from her, must have seen what I saw then. It was what the man saw in the woman by the mountain cabin, and what the other man saw in the horse trader's woman in the road.

Alice, when she said she was flat, wasn't flat. Alice trying to shake off the memory of an unsuccessful love.

She was walking across the open moonlit stretch of road like a queen, as that man who was once her lover said she used to walk across a room or across a stage.

The mountains out of which she came as a child must have been in her at the moment, and the moon and the night.

Myself in love with her, madly, for a moment.

Is anyone in love longer than that?

Alice shaking her head slightly. There may have been a trick of the light. Her stride lengthened, and she became tall and young. I remember stopping in the woods and staring. I was like the two other men of whom I have spoken. I had a cane in my hand, and it fell to the ground. I was like the man in the road and the other man in the field.

THE KING OF THE CATS

BY STEPHEN VINCENT BENET

FROM *Harper's Bazar*

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1928 with his narrative poem of the Civil War "John Brown's Body." He is also the author of other volumes of verse and several novels, the most recent being "The Spanish Bayonet."

BUT, my *dear*," said Mrs. Culverin, with a tiny gasp, "you can't actually mean—a *tail!*"

Mrs. Dingle nodded impressively. "Exactly. I've seen him. Twice. Paris, of course, and then, a command appearance at Rome—we were in the Royal box. He conducted—my dear, you've never heard such effects from an orchestra—and, my dear," she hesitated slightly, "he conducted *with it*."

"How perfectly, fascinatingly too horrid for words!" said Mrs. Culverin in a dazed but greedy voice. "We *must* have him to dinner as soon as he comes over—he is coming over, isn't he?"

"The twelfth," said Mrs. Dingle with a gleam in her eyes. "The New Symphony people have asked him to be guest conductor for three special concerts—I do hope you can dine with *us* some night while he's here—he'll be very busy, of course—but he's promised to give us what time he can spare."

"Oh, thank you, dear," said Mrs. Culverin abstractedly, her last raid upon Mrs. Dingle's pet British novelist still fresh in her mind. "You're always so delightfully hospitable—but you mustn't wear yourself out—the rest of us must do *our* part—I know Harry and myself would be only too glad to——"

"That's very sweet of you, darling." Mrs. Dingle also remembered the larceny of the British novelist. "But we're just going to give Monsieur Tibault—sweet name, isn't it! They say he's descended from the Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet* and that's why he doesn't like Shakespeare—we're just going to give Monsieur Tibault the simplest sort of time—a little reception after his first concert, perhaps. He hates," she looked around the table, "large, mixed parties. And then, of course, his—er—little idiosyncrasy." She coughed delicately. "It makes him feel a trifle shy with strangers."

"But I don't understand yet, Aunt Emily," said Tommy Brooks, Mrs. Dingle's nephew. "Do you really mean this

Tibault bozo has a tail? Like a monkey and everything?"

"Tommy dear," said Mrs. Culverin crushingly, "in the first place Monsieur Tibault is not a bozo—he is a very distinguished musician—the finest conductor in Europe. And in the second place——"

"He has." Mrs. Dingle was firm. "He has a tail. He conducts with it."

"Oh, but honestly!" said Tommy, his ears pinkening. "I mean—of course, if you say so, Aunt Emily, I'm sure he has—but still, it sounds pretty steep, if you know what I mean! How about it, Professor Tatto?"

Professor Tatto cleared his throat. "Tck," he said, putting his finger tips together cautiously. "I shall be very anxious to see this Monsieur Tibault. For myself, I have never observed a genuine specimen of *homo caudatus*, so I should be inclined to doubt, and yet. . . In the Middle Ages, for instance, the belief in men—er—tailed or with caudal appendages of some sort, was both widespread and, as far as we can gather, well founded. As late as the Eighteenth Century, a Dutch sea captain with some character for veracity recounts the discovery of a pair of such creatures in the island of Formosa. They were in a low state of civilization, I believe, but the appendages in question were quite distinct. And in 1860 Dr. Grimbrook, the English surgeon, claims to have treated no less than three African natives with short but evident tails—though his testimony rests upon his unsupported word. After all, the thing is not impossible, though doubtless unusual. Web feet—rudimentary gills—these occur with some frequency. The appendix we have with us always. The chain of our descent from the apelike form is by no means complete. For that matter," he beamed around the table, "what can we call the last few vertebræ of the normal spine but the beginnings of a concealed and rudimentary tail? Oh, yes—yes—it's possible—quite—that in an extraordinary case—a reversion to type—a—survival—though, of course——"

"I told you so," said Mrs. Dingle triumphantly. "*Isn't* it fascinating? Isn't it, Princess?"

The Princess Vivrakanarda's eyes, blue as a field of larkspur, fathomless as the center of heaven, rested lightly for a moment on Mrs. Dingle's excited countenance.

"Ve-ry fascinating," she said, in a voice like stroked, golden

velvet. "I should like—I should like ve-ry much to meet this Monsieur Tibault."

"Well, *I* hope he breaks his neck!" said Tommy Brooks under his breath—but nobody ever paid much attention to Tommy.

Nevertheless, as the time for Monsieur Tibault's arrival in these States drew nearer and nearer, people in general began to wonder whether the Princess had spoken quite truthfully—for there was no doubt of the fact that, up till then, she had been the unique sensation of the season—and you know what social lions and lionesses are.

It was, if you remember, a Siamese season, and genuine Siamese were at quite as much of a premium as Russian accents had been in the quaint old days when the Chauve-Souris was a novelty. The Siamese Art Theatre, imported at terrific expense, was playing to packed houses at the Century Theatre. *Gushuptzgu*, an epic novel of Siamese farm life, in nineteen closely printed volumes, had just been awarded the Nobel Prize. Prominent pet-and-newt dealers reported no cessation in the appalling demand for Siamese cats. And upon the crest of this wave of interest in things Siamese the Princess Vivrakanarda poised with the elegant nonchalance of a Hawaiian water baby upon his surfboard. She was indispensable. She was incomparable. She was everywhere.

Youthful, enormously wealthy, allied on one hand to the Royal Family of Siam and on the other to the Cabots (and yet with the first eighteen of her twenty-one years shrouded from speculation in a golden zone of mystery), the mingling of races in her had produced an exotic beauty as distinguished as it was strange. She moved with a feline, effortless grace, and her skin was as if it had been gently powdered with tiny grains of the purest gold—yet the blueness of her eyes, set just a trifle slantingly, was as pure and startling as the sea on the rocks of Maine. Her brown hair fell to her knees—she had been offered extraordinary sums by the Master Barbers' Protective Association to have it shingled. Straight as a waterfall tumbling over brown rocks, it had a vague perfume of sandalwood and suave spices and held tints of rust and the sun. She did not talk very much—but then she did not have to—her voice had an odd, small, melodious huskiness that haunted the mind. She lived alone and was reputed to be very

lazy—at least it was known that she slept during most of the day—but at night she bloomed like a moonflower, and a depth came into her eyes.

It was no wonder that Tommy Brooks fell in love with her. The wonder was that she let him. There was nothing exotic or distinguished about Tommy—he was just one of those pleasant, normal young men who seem created to carry on the bond business by reading the newspapers in the University Club during most of the day, and can always be relied upon at night to fill an unexpected hole in a dinner party. It is true that the Princess could hardly be said to do more than tolerate any of her suitors—no one had ever seen those aloofly arrogant eyes enliven at the entrance of any male. But she seemed to be able to tolerate Tommy a little more than the rest—and that young man's infatuated daydreams were beginning to be beset by smart solitaires and imaginary apartments on Park Avenue when the famous Monsieur Tibault conducted his first concert at Carnegie Hall.

Tommy Brooks sat beside the Princess. The eyes he turned upon her were eyes of longing and love, but her face was as impassive as a Benda mask, and the only remark she made during the preliminary bustlings was that there seemed to be a number of people in the audience. But Tommy was relieved, if anything, to find her even a little more aloof than usual, for, ever since Mrs. Culverin's dinner party, a vague disquiet as to the possible impression which this Tibault creature might make upon her had been growing in his mind. It shows his devotion that he was present at all. To a man whose simple Princetonian nature found in "Just a Little Love, a Little Kiss," the quintessence of musical art, the average symphony was a positive torture, and he looked forward to the evening's program itself with a grim, brave smile.

"Ssh!" said Mrs. Dingle breathlessly. "He's coming!" It seemed to the startled Tommy as if he were suddenly back in the trenches under a heavy barrage, as Monsieur Tibault made his entrance to a perfect bombardment of applause.

Then the enthusiastic noise was sliced off in the middle, and a gasp took its place—a vast, windy sigh, as if every person in that multitude had suddenly said "Ah!" For the papers had not lied about him. The tail was there.

They called him theatric—but how well he understood the

uses of theatricalism! Dressed in unrelieved black from head to foot (the black dress shirt had been a special token of Mussolini's esteem), he did not walk on, he strolled, leisurely, easily, aloofly, the famous tail curled nonchalantly about one wrist—a suave, black panther lounging through a summer garden with that little mysterious weave of the head that panthers have when they pad behind bars—the glittering darkness of his eyes unmoved by any surprise or elation. He nodded, twice, in regal acknowledgment, as the clapping reached an apogee of frenzy. To Tommy there was something dreadfully reminiscent of the Princess in the way he nodded. Then he turned to his orchestra.

A second and louder gasp went up from the audience at this point, for, as he turned, the tip of that incredible tail twined with dainty carelessness into some hidden pocket and produced a black baton. But Tommy did not even notice. He was looking at the Princess instead.

She had not even bothered to clap, at first, but now . . . He had never seen her moved like this, never. She was not applauding, her hands were clenched in her lap, but her whole body was rigid, rigid as a steel bar, and the blue flowers of her eyes were bent upon the figure of Monsieur Tibault in a terrible concentration. The pose of her entire figure was so still and intense that for an instant Tommy had the lunatic idea that any moment she might leap from her seat beside him as lightly as a moth, and land, with no sound, at Monsieur Tibault's side to—yes—to rub her proud head against his coat in worship. Even Mrs. Dingle would notice in a moment.

"Princess—" he said, in a horrified whisper, "Princess——"

Slowly the tenseness of her body relaxed, her eyes veiled again, she grew calm.

"Yes, Tommy?" she said, in her usual voice, but there was still something about her . . .

"Nothing, only—oh, hang—he's starting!" said Tommy, as Monsieur Tibault, his hands loosely clasped before him, turned and *faced* the audience. His eyes dropped, his tail switched once impressively, then gave three little preliminary taps with his baton on the floor.

Seldom has Gluck's overture to *Iphigenie in Aulis* received such an ovation. But it was not until the Eighth Symphony

that the hysteria of the audience reached its climax. Never before had the New Symphony been played so superbly—and certainly never before had it been led with such genius. Three prominent conductors in the audience were sobbing with the despairing admiration of envious children toward the close, and one at least was heard to offer wildly ten thousand dollars to a well-known facial surgeon there present for a shred of evidence that tails of some variety could by any stretch of science be grafted upon a normally decaudate form. There was no doubt about it—no mortal hand and arm, be they ever so dexterous, could combine the delicate élan and powerful grace displayed in every gesture of Monsieur Tibault's tail.

A sable staff, it dominated the brasses like a flicker of black lightning; an ebon, elusive whip, it drew the last exquisite breath of melody from the wood winds and ruled the stormy strings like a magician's rod. Monsieur Tibault bowed and bowed again—roar after roar of frenzied admiration shook the hall to its foundations—and when he finally staggered, exhausted, from the platform, the president of the Wednesday Sonata Club was only restrained by force from flinging her ninety-thousand-dollar string of pearls after him in an excess of esthetic appreciation. New York had come and seen—and New York was conquered. Mrs. Dingle was immediately besieged by reporters, and Tommy Brooks looked forward to the "little party" at which he was to meet the new hero of the hour with feelings only a little less lugubrious than those that would have come to him just before taking his seat in the electric chair.

The meeting between his princess and Monsieur Tibault was worse and better than he expected. Better because, after all, they did not say much to each other—and worse because it seemed to him, somehow, that some curious kinship of mind between them made words unnecessary. They were certainly the most distinguished-looking couple in the room, as he bent over her hand. "So darlingly foreign, both of them, and yet so different," babbled Mrs. Dingle—but Tommy couldn't agree.

They were different, yes—the dark, lithe stranger with that bizarre appendage tucked carelessly in his pocket, and

the blue-eyed, brown-haired girl. But that difference only accentuated what they had in common—something in the way they moved, in the suavity of their gestures, in the set of their eyes. Something deeper, even, than race. He tried to puzzle it out—then, looking around at the others, he had a flash of revelation. It was as if that couple were foreign, indeed—not only to New York but to all common humanity. As if they were polite guests from a different star.

Tommy did not have a very happy evening, on the whole. But his mind worked slowly, and it was not until much later that the mad suspicion came upon him in full force.

Perhaps he is not to be blamed for his lack of immediate comprehension. The next few weeks were weeks of bewildered misery for him. It was not that the Princess's attitude toward him had changed—she was just as tolerant of him as before, but Monsieur Tibault was always there. He had a faculty of appearing as out of thin air—he walked, for all his height, as lightly as a butterfly—and Tommy grew to hate that faintest shuffle on the carpet that announced his presence as he had never hated the pound of the guns.

And then, hang it all, the man was so smooth, so infernally, unruffably smooth! He was never out of temper, never embarrassed. He treated Tommy with the extreme of urbanity, and yet his eyes mocked, deep down, and Tommy could do nothing. And, gradually, the Princess became more and more drawn to this stranger, in a soundless communion that found little need for speech—and that, too, Tommy saw and hated, and that, too, he could not mend.

He began to be haunted not only by Monsieur Tibault in the flesh but by Monsieur Tibault in the spirit. He slept badly, and when he slept he dreamed—of Monsieur Tibault, a man no longer, but a shadow, a specter, the limber ghost of an animal whose words came purringly between sharp little pointed teeth. There was certainly something odd about the whole shape of the fellow—his fluid ease, the mold of his head, even the cut of his finger nails—but just what it was escaped Tommy's intensest cogitation. And when he did put his finger on it at length, at first he refused to believe.

A pair of petty incidents decided him, finally, against all reason. He had gone to Mrs. Dingle's, one winter afternoon, hoping to find the Princess. She was out with his aunt, but

was expected back for tea, and he wandered idly into the library to wait. He was just about to switch on the lights, for the library was always dark even in summer, when he heard a sound of light breathing that seemed to come from the leather couch in the corner. He approached it cautiously and dimly made out the form of Monsieur Tibault, curled up on the couch, peacefully asleep.

The sight annoyed Tommy so that he swore under his breath and was back near the door on his way out, when the feeling we all know and hate, the feeling that eyes we cannot see are watching us, arrested him. He turned back—Monsieur Tibault had not moved a muscle of his body to all appearance—but his eyes were open now. And those eyes were black and human no longer. They were green—Tommy could have sworn it—and he could have sworn that they had no bottom and gleamed like little emeralds in the dark. It only lasted a moment, for Tommy pressed the light-button automatically—and there was Monsieur Tibault, his normal self, yawning a little but urbanely apologetic, but it gave Tommy time to think. Nor did what happened a trifle later increase his peace of mind.

They had lit a fire and were talking in front of it—by now, Tommy hated Monsieur Tibault so thoroughly that he felt that odd yearning for his company that often occurs in such cases. Monsieur Tibault was telling some anecdote, and Tommy was hating him worse than ever for basking with such obvious enjoyment in the heat of the flames and the ripple of his own voice.

Then they heard the street door open, and Monsieur Tibault jumped up—and, jumping, caught one sock on a sharp corner of the brass fire rail and tore it open in a jagged flap. Tommy looked down mechanically at the tear—a second's glance, but enough—for Monsieur Tibault, for the first time in Tommy's experience, lost his temper completely. He swore violently in some spitting, foreign tongue—his face distorted suddenly—he clapped his hand over his sock. Then, glaring furiously at Tommy, he fairly sprang from the room, and Tommy could hear him scaling the stairs in long, agile bounds. Tommy sank into a chair, careless for once of the fact that he heard the Princess's light laugh in the hall. He didn't want to see the Princess. He didn't want to see anybody. There had

been something revealed when Monsieur Tibault had torn that hole in his sock—and it was not the skin of a man. Tommy had caught a glimpse of—black plush. Black velvet. And then had come Monsieur Tibault's sudden explosion of fury. Good *Lord*—did the man wear black velvet stockings under his ordinary socks? Or could he—could he—but here Tommy held his fevered head in his hands.

He went to Professor Tatto that evening with a series of hypothetical questions, but as he did not dare confide his real suspicions to the Professor, the hypothetical answers he received served only to confuse him the more. Then he thought of Billy Strang. Billy was a good sort, and his mind had a turn for the bizarre. Billy might be able to help.

He couldn't get hold of Billy for three days, and lived through the interval in a fever of impatience. But finally they had dinner together at Billy's apartment, where his queer books were, and Tommy was able to blurt out the whole disordered jumble of his suspicions.

Billy listened without interrupting until Tommy was quite through. Then he pulled at his pipe. "But, my dear *man*——" he said protestingly.

"Oh, I know—I know," said Tommy, and waved his hands, "I know I'm crazy—you needn't tell me that—but I tell you, the man's a cat all the same—no, I don't see how he could be, but he is—why, hang it, in the first place, everybody knows he's got a *tail!*"

"Even so," said Billy, puffing. "Oh, my dear Tommy, I don't doubt you saw, or think you saw, everything you say. But, even so . . ." He shook his head.

"But what about those other birds, werwolves and things?" said Tommy.

Billy looked dubious. "We-ll," he admitted, "you've got me there, of course. At least—a tailed man *is* possible. And the yarns about werwolves go back far enough so that—well, *I* wouldn't say there aren't or haven't been werwolves—but then I'm willing to believe more things than most people. But a wer-cat—or a man that's a cat and a cat that's a man—honestly, Tommy——"

"If I don't get some real advice I'll go clean off my hinge. For heaven's sake, tell me something to *do!*"

"Lemme think," said Billy. "First, you're pizen-sure this man is——"

"A cat. Yeah," and Tommy nodded violently.

"Check. And second—if it doesn't hurt your feelings, Tommy—you're afraid this girl you're in love with has—er—at least a streak of—felinity—in her—and so she's drawn to him?"

"Oh, Lord, Billy, if I only knew!"

"Well—er—suppose she really is, too, you know—would you still be keen on her?"

"I'd marry her if she turned into a dragon every Wednesday!" said Tommy fervently.

Billy smiled. "H'm," he said, "then the obvious thing to do is to get rid of this Monsieur Tibault. Lemme think."

He thought about two pipes full, while Tommy sat on pins and needles. Then, finally, he burst out laughing.

"What's so darn funny?" said Tommy aggrievedly.

"Nothing, Tommy, only I've just thought of a stunt—something so blooming crazy—but if he is—h'm—what you think he is—it *might* work——" And, going to the bookcase, he took down a book.

"If you think you're going to quiet my nerves by reading me a bedtime story——"

"Shut up, Tommy, and listen to this—if you really want to get rid of your feline friend."

"What is it?"

"Book of Agnes Repplier's. About cats. Listen.

"'There is also a Scandinavian version of the ever famous story which Sir Walter Scott told to Washington Irving, which Monk Lewis told to Shelley and which, in one form or another, we find embodied in the folklore of every land'—now, Tommy, pay attention—'the story of the traveler who saw within a ruined abbey, a procession of cats, lowering into a grave a little coffin with a crown upon it. Filled with horror, he hastened from the spot; but when he had reached his destination he could not forbear relating to a friend the wonder he had seen. Scarcely had the tale been told when his friend's cat, who lay curled up tranquilly by the fire, sprang to its feet, cried out, "Then I am the King of the Cats!" and disappeared in a flash up the chimney.'

"Well?" said Billy, shutting the book.

"By gum!" said Tommy, staring. "By gum! Do you think there's a chance?"

"*I* think we're both in the booby-hatch. But if you want to try it——"

"Try it! I'll spring it on him the next time I see him. But—listen—I can't make it a ruined abbey——"

"Oh, use your imagination! Make it Central Park—anywhere. Tell it as if it happened to you—seeing the funeral procession and all that. You can lead into it somehow—let's see—some general line—oh, yes—'Strange, isn't it, how fact so often copies fiction. Why, only yesterday——' See?"

"Strange, isn't it, how fact so often copies fiction," repeated Tommy dutifully. "Why, only yesterday——"

"I happened to be strolling through Central Park when I saw something very odd."

"I happened to be strolling through—here, gimme that book!" said Tommy, "I want to learn the rest of it by heart!"

Mrs. Dingle's farewell dinner to the famous Monsieur Tibault, on the occasion of his departure for his Western tour, was looked forward to with the greatest expectations. Not only could everybody be there, including the Princess Vivrakanarda, but Mrs. Dingle, a hinter if there ever was one, had let it be known that at this dinner an announcement of very unusual interest to Society might be made. So everyone, for once, was almost on time, except for Tommy. He was at least fifteen minutes early, for he wanted to have speech with his aunt alone. Unfortunately, however, he had hardly taken off his overcoat when she was whispering some news in his ear so rapidly that he found it difficult to understand a word of it.

"And you mustn't breathe it to a soul!" she ended, beaming. "That is, not before the announcement—I think we'll have *that* with the salad—people never pay very much attention to salad——"

"Breathe what, Aunt Emily?" said Tommy, confused.

"The Princess, darling—the dear Princess and Monsieur Tibault—they just got engaged this afternoon, dear things! Isn't it *fascinating?*"

"Yeah," said Tommy, and started to walk blindly through the nearest door. His aunt restrained him.

"Not there, dear—not in the library. You can congratulate them later. They're just having a sweet little moment alone there now." And she turned away to harry the butler, leaving Tommy stunned.

But his chin came up after a moment. He wasn't beaten yet.

"Strange, isn't it, how often fact copies fiction?" he repeated to himself in dull mnemonics, and, as he did so, he shook his fist at the library door.

Mrs. Dingle was wrong, as usual. The Princess and Monsieur Tibault were not in the library—they were in the conservatory, as Tommy discovered when he wandered aimlessly past the glass doors.

He didn't mean to look, and after a second he turned away. But that second was enough.

Tibault was seated in a chair and she was crouched on a stool at his side, while his hand, softly, smoothly, stroked her brown hair. Black cat and Siamese kitten. Her face was hidden from Tommy, but he could see Tibault's face. And he could hear.

They were not talking, but there was a sound between them. A warm and contented sound like the murmur of giant bees in a hollow tree—a golden, musical rumble, deep-throated, that came from Tibault's lips and was answered by hers—a golden purr.

Tommy found himself back in the drawing room, shaking hands with Mrs. Culverin, who said frankly that she had seldom seen him look so pale.

The first two courses of the dinner passed Tommy like dreams, but Mrs. Dingle's cellar was notable, and by the middle of the meat course he began to come to himself. He had only one resolve now.

For the next few moments he tried desperately to break into the conversation, but Mrs. Dingle was talking, and even Gabriel will have a time interrupting Mrs. Dingle. At last, though, she paused for breath, and Tommy saw his chance.

"Speaking of that," said Tommy piercingly, without knowing in the least what he was referring to, "speaking of that——"

"As I was saying," said Professor Tatto. But Tommy

would not yield. The plates were being taken away. It was time for salad.

"Speaking of that," he said again, so loudly and strangely that Mrs. Culverin jumped, and an awkward hush fell over the table. "Strange, isn't it, how often fact copies fiction?" There, he was started. His voice rose even higher. "Why, only to-day I was strolling through——" and, word for word, he repeated his lesson. He could see Tibault's eyes glowing at him as he described the funeral. He could see the Princess, tense.

He could not have said what he had expected might happen when he came to the end. But it was not bored silence, everywhere, to be followed by Mrs. Dingle's acrid, "Well, Tommy, is that *quite* all?"

He slumped back in his chair, sick at heart. He was a fool, and his last resource had failed. Dimly he heard his aunt's voice saying, "Well, then——" and realized that she was about to make the fatal announcement.

But just then Monsieur Tibault spoke.

"One moment, Mrs. Dingle," he said, with extreme politeness, and she was silent. He turned to Tommy.

"You are—positive, I suppose, of what you saw this afternoon, Brooks?" he said, in tones of light mockery.

"Absolutely," said Tommy sullenly. "Do you think I'd——"

"Oh, no, no, no," Monsieur Tibault waved the implication aside, "but—such an interesting story—one likes to be sure of the details—and, of course, you *are* sure—*quite* sure—that the kind of crown you describe was on the coffin?"

"Of course," said Tommy, wondering, "but——"

"Then I'm the King of the Cats!" cried Monsieur Tibault in a voice of thunder, and, even as he cried it, the house lights blinked—there was the soft thud of an explosion that seemed muffled in cotton wool from the minstrel gallery—and the scene was lit for a second by an obliterating and painful burst of light that vanished in an instant and was succeeded by heavy, blinding clouds of white, pungent smoke.

"Oh, those *horrid* photographers," came Mrs. Dingle's voice in a melodious wail. "I *told* them not to take the flashlight picture till dinner was over, and now they've taken it *just* as I was nibbling lettuce!"

Someone tittered a little nervously. Someone coughed. Then, gradually, the veils of smoke dislimned and the green and black spots in front of Tommy's eyes died away.

They were blinking at each other like people who have just come out of a cave into brilliant sun. Even yet their eyes stung with the fierceness of that abrupt illumination, and Tommy found it hard to make out the faces across the table from him.

Mrs. Dingle took command of the half-blinded company with her accustomed poise. She rose, glass in hand. "And now, dear friends," she said in a clear voice, "I'm sure all of us are very happy to——" Then she stopped, open-mouthed, an expression of incredulous horror on her features. The lifted glass began to spill its contents on the tablecloth in a little stream of amber. As she spoke she had turned directly to Monsieur Tibault's place at the table—and Monsieur Tibault was no longer there.

Some say there was a bursting flash of fire that disappeared up the chimney—some say it was a giant cat that leaped through the window at a bound, without breaking the glass. Professor Tatto puts it down to a mysterious chemical disturbance operating only over Monsieur Tibault's chair. The butler, who is pious, believes the devil in person flew away with him, and Mrs. Dingle hesitates between witchcraft and a malicious ectoplasm dematerializing on the wrong cosmic plane. But be that as it may, one thing is certain—in the instant of fictive darkness which followed the glare of the flashlight, Monsieur Tibault, the great conductor, disappeared forever from mortal sight, tail and all.

Mrs. Culverin swears he was an international burglar and that she was just about to unmask him, when he slipped away under cover of the flashlight smoke, but no one else who sat at that historic dinner table believes her. No, there are no sound explanations, but Tommy thinks he knows, and he will never be able to pass a cat again without wondering.

Mrs. Tommy is quite of her husband's mind regarding cats —she was Gretchen Woolwine, of Chicago (*you* know the Woolwines!)—for Tommy told her his whole story, and, while she doesn't believe a great deal of it, there is no doubt in her heart that one person concerned in the affair was a *perfect* cat. Doubtless it would have been more romantic to relate how

Tommy's daring finally won him his princess—but, unfortunately, it would not be veracious. For the Princess Vivrakanarda, also, is with us no longer. Her nerves, shattered by the spectacular dénouement of Mrs. Dingle's dinner, required a sea voyage, and from that voyage she has never returned to America.

Of course, there are the usual stories—one hears of her, a nun in a Siamese convent, or a masked dancer at Le Jardin de ma Sœur—one hears that she has been murdered in Patagonia or married in Trebizon—but, as far as can be ascertained, not one of these gaudy fables has the slightest basis in fact. I believe that Tommy, in his heart of hearts, is quite convinced that the sea voyage was only a pretext, and that by some unheard-of means she has managed to rejoin the formidable Monsieur Tibault, wherever in the world of the visible or the invisible he may be—in fact, that in some ruined city or subterranean palace they reign together now, King and Queen of all the mysterious Kingdom of Cats. But that, of course, is quite impossible.

THE APOTHECARY

BY LOUIS BROMFIELD

FROM *Cosmopolitan*, under title "The Skeleton at the Feast." Also included in a volume entitled *Awake and Rehearse*, by Louis Bromfield, published by Frederick A. Stokes Company

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HE WAS a little bent old man with a scraggly beard, and he lived in the basement of an ancient tottering house in the Faubourg St. Germain, on the edge of a quarter made fashionable by Americans who were rich or "artistic" and sometimes both. The house was not quite in the quarter, for it turned its decrepit back upon rows of rookeries which housed the poor of Montparnasse. It was from these houses that the old man drew most of his trade, for he was an apothecary, and his shop was so dark and so evil-smelling that only the poor who could not afford the prices of the glittering nightly lighted shops came to him for strange mixtures and nostrums.

It was said that he was something of a necromancer, and that he brewed love philters and potions for restoring youth, and even powders which, when burned, had the power of suffocating an enemy, though he be on the other side of the earth. It was known too that he sold drugs which had qualities more certain of their effect: it was these powders which sometimes attracted well-dressed ladies and gentlemen into his little den beneath the turn of the stairs in the house on the Rue Jacquinot.

He had been there always so far as anyone in the quarter knew. He held an ancient lease to which he clung, even after the quarter began to grow picturesque and fashionable, and the old house was renovated and had its front repainted like the face of an old harridan by a Spanish proprietor with the wisdom to make it livable without destroying its picturesqueness. The house and the Apothecary seemed inseparable; either separated from the other would have seemed isolated and torn from its roots. As you entered you sometimes caught a swift glimpse of a thick, dirty beard, from which gleamed two little ratlike eyes—all dimly seen in the shadows of the evil-smelling shop. And sometimes you caught the queer light of another pair of eyes; they were the eyes of the Apothecary's cat, a black, unfriendly animal.

There was no concierge in the house, for the Apothecary occupied the quarters which should have belonged to a concierge, and so it was a house in which you were quite free to do as you pleased because there was no one to watch you enter or leave. No one considered the Apothecary as human; no one ever thought of his watching what went on in the house.

He was only a gnome who lived half underground and was never seen after he put up his shutters with the fall of night.

The house attracted, one by one, persons whose mode of life fitted into a scheme of living which did not include the prying eye of a concierge. First of all came a little dark man with tiny hands and feet, who wore bangles on his wrist, carried a yellow Malacca stick, and spent his time at questionable cafés of the quarter. He occupied the top floor. And after him, to occupy the second, came Lady Connie Cheviott, a thin, white young Englishwoman, granddaughter of a duke, with dyed red hair, and weary old eyes, set in a too-hard face. And last of all came Daisy Sackville—boisterous, good-natured, buxom "Daisy."

People said: "Have you seen the absurd ramshackle house where Daisy has moved?" Because everyone knew Daisy; she was a sort of queen in that cosmopolitan, slightly shabby world that moved through the corridors of Ciro's and the Ritz. Daisy was the friend of grand duchesses and exiled kings, demimondaines and cheese manufacturers, bankrupt and bogus noblesse, millionaires and gigolos. In all that world she was a sort of queen reigning jointly with madness and folly and despair over a mad kingdom.

Some said that Daisy was English in origin, but most people believed that she came originally by the long road of burlesque, vaudeville, and the movies from Little Rock, Arkansas. Daisy, herself never troubled to clear up the mystery. For the purposes of the world she was Daisy Sackville, a retired opera singer. She had long ago lost any pretensions to a singing voice; indeed, when she spoke, her voice sounded coarse and metallic.

Long ago Daisy had come to live by her wits. One day she was rich, and the next she had nothing but debts, and yet so great was fame that there were certain restaurants and certain dressmakers who considered it good advertising to feed and clothe Daisy without any hope of payment. She always

brought in her train dukes and princesses with names that once had been glorious, and—what was of greater interest to tradesmen—millionaires in chocolate or perfume and their lady friends.

Daisy's success rested upon two gifts: first that she was born a comic, and second that she had a great and overflowing animal vitality—indeed, enough of vitality for herself and enough left over to give that tired, despairing world over which she reigned a semblance of actual life. For years, ever since the war and the collapse of old Europe, Daisy had been supplying vitality and entertainment now in Rome, now on the Lido, now on the Riviera, now at Deauville or London, but most of all in Paris, which was the capital of her mad kingdom.

And now, at fifty-five, Daisy, the indefatigable Daisy, the Daisy who was "always the life of the party," had begun to grow tired. There were days when she wanted passionately to lie in bed sleeping and eating chocolates and reading cheap novels as she had done in the far-off, mysterious, palmy days of her too-plump and voluptuous youth. But, tragically, there was no rest for Daisy. If she rested, perhaps even for a day, people would forget her, and she would be faced only by poverty and a horrible old age.

She lived by keeping always in the limelight. And so each day she had to forget that she was old and sometimes suffered from rheumatism; and, rising wearily, she would paint her face and touch up her hair and do the agonizing exercises that were meant to reduce her figure. And a little later the Apothecary would see her pass through the evil-smelling hall—a bedizened, painted woman, past middle age, setting out to organize some fête or party to divert her mad kingdom.

The sense of her great weariness swept over her for the first time on the day she moved into the ancient house in the Rue Jacquinot. There was something in the atmosphere of the place, perhaps the centuries-old, musty spell of the dim hallway, that oppressed her. Even after the trouble and confusion of moving there was no rest for her. She lay down for a few minutes and then had a bath and dressed and went out to dinner and on to Hinky-Dink's to hear the Negroes sing.

It was dawn when she returned at last, and the Apothecary and the black cat were on the pavement, engaged in taking

down his shutters and washing his windows. It was the first time she had ever seen him, and the sight of his bent figure and dirty beard and bright, malicious old eyes gave her a fright; she could not explain why.

Afterward she told herself that it was because she was tired and because her vitality was terribly low at such an hour of the morning.

But the image of him remained—bent, crooked, and dirty, with malicious, prying eyes. It came to her sometimes in the midst of the gayest evenings when she sat telling risqué stories at Ciro's, with a grand duke on her right and a millionaire on her left. She never saw him again, even in the gray light of the dawn, but only in the darkness of his dark little cave—a mass of matted hair pierced by two ratlike malicious eyes. It seemed to her that he knew all the long history which she had managed to keep secret, that he was accusing her of things which no one could possibly know save herself.

And she thought, "This is nonsense. I must not, I dare not let my nerves get the better of me—I, who have never had a nerve in my body. Truly, I'm strong as a horse."

But the image did not go away, and she tried to destroy it by jesting at it. She had a way—the way of people who live by their wits—of turning poverty and other disadvantages into capital, and so she sought to make of the dirty little Apothecary a bit of "atmosphere" which lent luster to herself. When people asked her about the picturesque and amusing old house in which she had taken an apartment she described it with a great deal of noisy wit, always adding, "But the best of all is the old man—the Apothecary—who lives in the basement. He's been there forever, since the house was built."

But the mention of him had, just the same, a way of bringing a little cloud of depression. He came presently to occupy a place in Daisy's scheme of things very near to that of the corpse which the ancient Egyptians brought in during the midst of a feast to remind them of the nearness of death. His eyes were not pleasant because they seemed to go about with you everywhere.

And among the grand dukes and harlots, profiteers and gigolos of Daisy's mad world, the Apothecary came to be a character. People who had never seen him spoke of him as

"Daisy's Apothecary." He came to be a joke at dinners at Ciro's and the Ritz. One heard of him in the palaces of Rome and on the beach at Deauville.

As Daisy grew older and more weary she had sudden moments when, looking in the mirror while she painted her sagging face, her hand would pause suddenly, and fascinated by her own reflection she would find herself saying, "That thing in the mirror is Daisy Sackville—that battered, decaying, tired old woman who was born Tessie Dunker in Little Rock, Arkansas."

And one by one all the facets of a many-sided past—her vices, her betrayals, her sins—would have a way of rising up out of the funeral wrappings of forty years and returning to her in a horrid, fascinating procession. It was a terrible experience—this seeing one's self for the first time, especially, if, like Daisy, you had always lived noisily in the moment without ever giving a thought to the past.

But in the end she would always dab on a trifle more rouge and rise quickly from her dressing table, saying to herself, "After all, I *am* Daisy Sackville. Everybody has heard of me. My friends are the flower of Europe—the cream of the old-world nobility." And she would recite to herself such names as the grand duke's and Lady Connie Cheviott's, and the Princesse de Vigne's and the Duke of Sebastiola's.

"The flower of Europe," was a phrase which consoled her. She thought of it frequently, especially at the times when she kept seeing the beady, ratlike eyes of the Apothecary.

On the night of the same day that Daisy moved into the house on the Rue Jacquinot she had, however, a stroke of luck. As she entered the bar at Ciro's she caught a glimpse of a dark, familiar young face, a face which troubled her for a moment until her amazing memory—the memory which had saved her so many times—placed it. She knew suddenly, in a quick flash. It was Tony Markham—young, rich, idle, somewhat of a ne'er-do-well, an excellent dancer and a sportsman. She could not say at once why she was glad to see him there; she only experienced a swift sense of pleasure at the sight of his youth and his vigorous young figure, and then a sudden swift thought that she could make use of him in her world.

She had come of late to pounce upon anything that was

young and not tired. She could feed his youth to her weary world; there were women in it who would adore this handsome young American. And so, sweeping forward royally, all her false jewels aglitter, she approached him, crying out in her hearty, booming voice:

"Why, Tony Markham! When did you turn up in Paris?"

The boy looked at her for a moment, puzzled, and then said quickly, "Oh, hello, Daisy!" and took her hand.

They really knew each other scarcely at all; she had seen him as a boy of nineteen at Faley's in Palm Beach before she found the place a little too unpleasant for her; but it was impossible to resist the cordiality of the great Daisy. They used first names at once.

She said, "I'm dining with the Duke of Sebastiola's party. You must join us." And she recited the names, splendorous, high-sounding names famous in the history of Europe, of all those who were in the party. To be sure, there was also a movie actress of dubious reputation and a man suspected of espionage during the war and a decayed demimondaine, but she overlooked these.

"But I can't," he said. "You see, I'm waiting for a friend of mine—a girl. I'm showing her the sights of Paris. I'm waiting for her now."

A bright, hard look came into Daisy's too-brilliant eyes. "Why, bring her, of course," she said. "We'd love to have her."

Tony hesitated. He even blushed a little. "I don't think it would be a success," he protested. "You see—you see—well, she wouldn't be at home in such a party. You see, she's only twenty—she's *jeune fille*."

For a moment something, perhaps the mention of age—"only twenty"—or the words "*jeune fille*" gave Daisy a bad turn. Her robust figure seemed to wilt a little, but she recovered herself quickly, saying, "I understand. Well, you must join us soon in another party. Where are you staying?"

He wrote his address on a card, and taking it, she said, "You must come and see me some day soon. I live in the most fascinating house. Give me a card and I'll write the address"—she scribbled hastily. "There's no concierge. I live on the first floor. In the basement there's only an apothecary—but

don't disturb him when you come. He's a little cracked and unpleasant. I must tell you about him sometime. But I must go. Bunny is calling me."

And with a trill of professional laughter she swept through the crowd like a ship to where a tall, sallow duke stood beckoning to her. Daisy called dukes by pet names. Bunny was a grand duke.

A little while after she had gone the girl whom Tony awaited came through the whirling door, and, dazzled for a second by the glare of brilliant lights, she stood staring about her. She was young and slender and blond, with the look, Tony told her in one of his shamed sentimental moments, of a young bride. Her eyes were blue and candid, with a look of wonder in them, as if she found all this world about her fascinating and unreal. And yet there was a curious air of assurance, even of self-confidence about her, and an odd look of dignity. Blond and lovely in her ermine coat, one noticed her at once.

But Tony saw her first of all.

There are at Ciro's two rooms: one is right and one is wrong. The right room is crowded with the fashionable, the notorious, the freakish, the bankrupt; it is small, and people sit back to back in order to squeeze into it. There are people who will not dine at Ciro's if they can't have a table in the "right" room. The wrong room is filled comfortably by the nonentities and by those who do not "know."

Tony had a table for two in the right room. Daisy's party occupied the largest and most resplendent table. The party, she had said, was given by the Duke of Sebastiola, but she did not say it was paid for by the wife of an American millionaire cheese manufacturer who wanted to know "the flower of Europe."

The two tables were near each other, and throughout the evening Daisy watched the two young people as if they had an evil fascination for her. There was something spidery in her behavior. She pointed them out to the Duke of Sebastiola, a lean, handsome, sallow man, with a tiny blue-black mustache and a monocle, who took a great interest.

"They are so young and fresh," he said mockingly. "But they won't last long. You must arrange to have me meet the girl, Daisy." And fixing his monocle for a better look he added,

"She is adorable." He drew out the word "adorable," for he was Italian and spoke with an accent.

Before Tony and the girl left Daisy went over to their table. "Tony dear," she said, "I'm giving a party on Saturday, and you must come."

Again he refused, but he introduced the girl. Her name was Ann Masterson.

"What a lovely name, my dear," said Daisy. "Are you a relation of the Syosset Mastersons?"

"Yes," said the girl. "He's my uncle."

"I know them all well," said Daisy with an irresistible enthusiasm. "It makes such a difference, knowing one's relations, doesn't it? Perhaps you'll come on Saturday?"

"She can't," said Tony. "We're going to the same dinner."

Then, for the first time, Daisy's claws showed a little. She gave the boy a look which said, "You'll gain nothing by opposing me in that way. You may regret it. Daisy Sackville is not to be snubbed."

With a sweet smile she said, "Well, another time, perhaps." And bidding them good-night she went back to join the dukes and princes and demimondaines, who were moving on to another "party."

The girl looked after her with amused blue eyes. "So that's the great Daisy," she said.

"Yes, she's one of the sights of Paris, but I'd keep clear of her if I were you."

"I feel sorry for her."

Tony laughed. "Sorry for Daisy! Great heavens, why?"

"She's old and tired," said the girl gravely.

"Why, Daisy loves this life. She's never been tired in her life. She doesn't dare to risk being tired."

"That's just it."

"Are you disappointed in her?" Tony asked.

"No—I'd never thought about her before, even though I'd always heard of her."

"She wanted us to join her party."

Ann looked up quickly. "Why didn't you? It would have been amusing."

"There are people in that party you ought not to know."

The girl laughed. "Great heavens, Tony! I'm not a child. I can look out for myself."

Tony looked suddenly gloomy. "You're not their sort."

"Don't pull the woman-on-a-pedestal stuff," she said with a laugh.

"Besides, I'm sorry I'm giving you such a boring evening."

She leaned across the table and, smiling, touched his hand. "You know that's not true," she said. "Don't be a spoiled boy."

As Daisy left the restaurant she was talking and laughing boisterously. She was being the life of the party. But she was thinking: "Masterson—Ann Masterson—niece of the Syosset Masterson. Why, she must be John Masterson's daughter."

John Masterson was worth perhaps twenty millions, and the girl had no mother. And she was young and beautiful—young—young . . . If she married someone picked out by Daisy, then Daisy could borrow money. She would have someone, perhaps the Duke of Sebastiola himself, under obligations. In any case, the girl was fresh and young and beautiful . . .

It might have been said that Ann Masterson was a cousin of Henry James's Daisy Miller. She was young, she was rich, she had come to Europe for the first time. Thus far the two were alike; but elsewhere there were differences. Ann was neither naïve nor gullible. Her proud, fine carriage told the story; she was awed by no one, by no name, by no tradition. And the times had changed.

At the moment when Daisy Sackville stood by her table begging them to come to her party, she knew that it was all that tired, hungry world at Daisy's back who wanted them, because she and Tony were young, with all life before them.

When Tony refused, he was, without knowing it, avenging poor Daisy Miller.

And, unlike Daisy, Ann had no scheming, vulgar mother. Instead there was the desiccated, refined Miss Van Siden, who for thirty years had supported herself by acting as companion and chaperon for young girls traveling abroad. Miss Van Siden's grandfather had not been, like Ann Masterson's, a steel puddler who amassed a great fortune in the 'eighties; he had been a gentleman of old New York, living in a red brick house on Washington Square. Why, even Miss Van Siden could remember the visits paid him by the Duke of

Middlebottom—grandfather of the same Lady Connie Cheviott who lived in the old house above the Apothecary—and by the Duke of Sebastiola's cousin.

Miss Van Siden was proud of her grandfather because he was all that was left her in which she might take pride. She had a great awe for those names which had crowned Daisy Sackville their queen.

When she heard Tony Markham speak of the sacred names as "these bums," it made her feel a little sick. It was almost as if he had insulted her own grandfather.

She did not like Tony; there was a sort of implacable hatred between them. And because she knew that he was in love with Ann Masterson she did everything in her power to keep them apart.

The oddest thing of all was that Daisy Sackville had once known Miss Van Siden. There had been a time, fifteen years earlier, when Miss Van Siden accepted her with thin tightened lips, because Daisy stayed at the right country houses in England. But the two women were born to hate each other, and in the struggle Miss Van Siden was a poor match for such an unscrupulous, quick-tongued creature as Daisy.

So when Ann came in one afternoon from the races at Auteuil where she had been with Tony, and said that Daisy Sackville was giving a dinner in her honor, Miss Van Siden pursed her thin Van Siden lips and said sharply, but with the sweet smile of a professional chaperon, "Oh, but you can't do that, my dear. You can't be seen in public restaurants with such a notorious woman as Daisy Sackvlile. Your father wouldn't think of it."

And Ann, who appeared for some reason flushed and angry, said, "It's not to be in a restaurant. It's to be in her own house and she's invited only the most charming and respectable people. I'm not a child, Miss Van Siden."

"Is young Mr. Markham going with you?"

"No."

There was a silence, and presently Miss Van Siden said casually, "I thought Mr. Markham was coming back to tea."

"No, he's not coming. We quarreled."

Ann flung down her fur. "I'm tired of Tony's moral tone. He's always saying I mustn't do this or that. I mustn't become friendly with so-and-so. 'They're not the right sort for

a nice young girl like you.'" She turned abruptly. "I'm not a child. And I didn't come over here to spend my time in the Louvre like a schoolgirl. I came to see Europe. Daisy Sackville is part of it. Everybody knows her. She's one of the sights of our times. She's very kind to me, poor old thing, and I can't slap her in the face for that. Besides, I feel sorry for her."

Miss Van Siden only answered, "Just the same, I don't trust Daisy Sackville. She's a creature to be afraid of."

But Ann only looked at her scornfully, and Miss Van Siden poured herself a cup of weak tea. It gave her an odd, nervous feeling to find herself suddenly ranged side by side with the exuberant Tony, who had no respect for great names.

And on the other side of the wall poor Daisy Sackville had been spinning her web with a kind of desperation. The older, the more tired she grew, the more terrified she became of the future. Lately she had noticed that her "friends" laughed less heartily at her coarse sallies; they even began to show signs of boredom at her jokes about the strange house in which she lived and the unpleasant Apothecary who occupied the basement. It was as if they sensed her own weariness, her own boredom. And the damp, mysterious personality of the Apothecary seemed in a strange way to go about with her, imposing itself like a noxious fog over her gay "parties." He was ceasing any longer to be an eccentric joke; he was beginning slowly to rise up before them all—the grand dukes and demimondaines, the cheese merchants and marquises—with the same horrible reality which marked his presence in Daisy's house.

And all the while Daisy was being pressed not only by her desperate knowledge that she must go on feeding her world with vitality, but by the more definite, persistent desires of the Duke of Sebastiola. He was a tall, sallow young man of thirty-six, the last of his race, who lived precariously in the heart of Daisy's kingdom. He, like Miss Van Siden, lived upon the glory of the past, because the present was hopeless, and there existed no future.

In some restaurants he was able to eat without paying, because the proprietor realized his value as an object of art to be pointed out to tourists. He was quite without brain and wit, and his vitality had long ago reached a low ebb, from

which it had never again risen to cover the barren rocks of adversity. He had two great assets—a glorious name and a thin, distinguished, cruel face.

The Duke had marked Ann Masterson on that first night at Ciro's. He, like Daisy, had a terror of the future. In a little while he would have turned the corner into middle age, with no money, no future.

So he had marked Ann Masterson the moment Daisy had crossed the garish "right room" at Ciro's to speak to her. He told Daisy that he must meet the girl, and later, when he and Daisy came cautiously to understand each other more clearly, he gave her to understand that if he married a girl—not perhaps Miss Masterson, but a girl like her with a large fortune—he would see to it—when he got control of the money—that Daisy didn't suffer in her old age from having arranged the affair.

So hope had dawned for Daisy; her terror of the Apothecary's terrible, piercing black eyes even waned a little; she began to have visions of an old age spent comfortably free from the terrible rush of gayety. And being a shrewd woman with a long hard life behind her, she began to take account of the elements which opposed her. There was, first of all, Tony Markham. He did not like her, but Daisy knew that she must pretend ignorance of the fact. She must always be pleasant and candid and give the girl to understand that she, Daisy, was one of Tony's oldest and best friends.

So, at the races on that day when Tony and Ann quarreled, she crossed the paddock and spoke to Tony as if he had sat on her knee as a child. She flattered the girl and said at last:

"I'm going to have a dinner soon, and you must come, my dear. Indeed, I think I'll give it in your honor. You must meet some of the most charming people here." She was careful not to mention any definite day, so that Tony, standing there beside them frowning like a thunderstorm, could not claim some previous engagement. "I'll write you, my dear, and fix the day—very soon."

And Ann, who was a little irritated with Tony, replied, "I'd love to come. I must speak to Miss Van Siden about it."

At this Daisy's tired painted face beamed. "Not Miss Lavinia Van Siden! Not really! Why, we know each other well. I've known her always. We used to stay at the dear

Duke of Middlebottom's every autumn—I mean the old Duke, dear Connie Cheviott's grandfather. I must see Lavinia. I'll write her a note telling her who I'm inviting—the flower of Europe."

And when Daisy had gone away again, lost in the crowd of trainers and manikins, millionaires and concierges that filled the paddock, the quarrel began in earnest.

Tony's dark face grew blacker than ever. "You're not really going to a party given by that old hag."

But Ann's eyes took on that calm, clear, dangerous look. "Of course I'm going. Why shouldn't I? That's what I came to Europe for."

It grew worse and worse, and at last Tony said wildly, "If you prefer that set of bums to my company, maybe it's better that I retire from the field altogether."

And coldly Ann answered, "Perhaps it is. Certainly I don't want to marry a man who treats me like a half-witted child. Besides, if she's such a terrible woman, how do you come to know her so well?"

"I don't know her well—that's just her professional manner. Besides, with a man it's different. A man can look out for himself."

Tony should never have chosen that argument. Ann's proud nose tilted a little higher.

"That's what all men say. But it isn't different any more. If you don't know that, we'd better part now. Will you get me a taxicab?"

Daisy was too clever to risk a meeting with Miss Van Siden; she had said in the paddock, "I must see her," when she meant, "I must *not* see her"; and then she had watched Tony and Ann from a distance, knowing in her shrewd way that she had caused them to quarrel.

She did know Miss Van Siden: she knew exactly the vulnerable spots of the snobbish old spinster. So on the morning after the races, with the eyes of the Apothecary haunting her more dreadfully than usual, she wrote a note to Miss Van Siden.

It arrived at the Hôtel Crillon in the evening after dinner, when Ann sat reading in a corner while Miss Van Siden wrote one of her endless letters to some obscure cousin who lived

up the Hudson. Ann had been weeping; even the careful powdering and applications of cold water made to deceive Miss Van Siden did not succeed in hiding the fact.

She had been weeping on account of the note—a note from Tony—that lay concealed in the pages of her book. It read simply:

I'm sorry if I was rude yesterday, but I've been thinking things over and have come to the conclusion that perhaps you're right. We'd better not see each other again. Of course you won't want to go with me to the theater, so I've sent the tickets in case you and Miss Van Siden want to use them. I hope you'll enjoy yourself at Daisy's party. I suppose I should have forbidden you to go and then made you obey me. But, as you say, times have changed, and women in these days always know best. I hope you'll enjoy the rest of your stay in Paris. Certainly Daisy can show you things I couldn't.

TONY.

She had wept because she had lost him, and knew suddenly that she had been foolish. She had wept too because she had humbled her high pride and sent a message to him at his hotel only to obtain the answer that he had gone away, they did not know where, perhaps to Deauville. And she wept too because Tony had done what she thought he would never do—take her at her word and give her up.

And then, as the tears dried, she began to grow angry once more—angry at Tony because he had done what she didn't think he had the courage to do, and because her own vanity was wounded. Anger at Tony helped to heal these wounds.

And then, just at that moment, there was a knock on the door, and a boy arrived bringing Daisy's note. Ann watched Miss Van Siden read slowly once and then again; she watched her expression soften and a bright look come into her dull, nearsighted eyes. Ann knew the look; it came into Miss Van Siden's eye at the mention of royalty.

Miss Van Siden turned in her gilt chair. "It's from Daisy Sackville," she said, "asking you to dinner. Was it this dinner that Tony disapproved of?"

"Yes."

"Tony is foolish. He's a wild, nonsensical boy without respect." (And in the withered, envious heart a flame of shameful delight leaped. Tony was being defeated. Perhaps, after all, Ann would lose him.)

"That's what I told him," said Ann.

"It's a very distinguished party," continued Miss Van Siden, turning the pages of Daisy's innocent mauve note. "I don't like Daisy. She's a notorious woman, but certainly the people she mentions are the very best—there's even the Grand Duke Augustus. I should think it quite safe." (New little plans of marrying Ann—the rich Ann Masterson—to some great title began to stir in Miss Van Siden's Nineteenth Century brain.)

She began to read, peering closely at the mauve paper. "She says that she's asked Lady Connie Cheviott, the Duke of Middlebottom's granddaughter, and the Duke of Sebastiola —his cousin, dear, once visited my father, I remember him well—and the Princesse de Vigne and the Grand Duke and Mrs. Brodman. I don't know Mrs. Brodman—but she must be all right to be included in such a party. As Miss Sackville says, they represent the flower of Europe."

With a flush of pride Miss Van Siden read out the last drops of Daisy's poison. "'Of course,' Daisy writes, 'you know all these people well. There's no need of my telling you who they are.'"

It was that line which won the struggle for Daisy.

Miss Van Siden said, "Would you like to go?"

"Yes," said Ann, and then in a wave of rage at Tony, at Miss Van Siden, at all the world, she added sharply, "I mean to."

Two days before Daisy's dinner party the Apothecary disappeared. When Daisy came down at noon his damp, dirty little shop was closed and blind; all the shutters were still up, and the pavement was unswept. There were no black, burning eyes to peer out accusingly as she went by the door.

Daisy's heart leaped at the sight. She felt that if only she could escape those eyes, she would again feel as tireless and gay as ever.

The next day the Apothecary's shop remained closed, and on the morning of the dinner Daisy asked the *femme de ménage*, who cleaned the stairs, what had become of him.

"He has probably gone off to the country. He has done it before," said the woman.

Perhaps, thought Daisy, he has gone for good, and then I shan't have to move out. For the eyes had worked on Daisy's

worn nerves until at times she considered fleeing the picturesque old house altogether.

She had the wild, fierce superstitions of a born gambler, and so she looked upon it as a good omen when the Apothecary quietly disappeared. While he had been there watching from his smelly little den, looking over her shoulder at this game which she played with life itself, everything had gone wrong: she had grown old and weary; she had lost money; she had come close to bankruptcy, and bankruptcy at fifty-five was not so simple an affair as it had been at thirty.

But all that was changed now. The Apothecary's evil eye had vanished. She had a gambler's intuition that it was gone forever. The Duke had promised her that her old age would be comfortable if he married Ann Masterson. The girl had quarreled with Tony, and he had gone away. Daisy knew this, too, as she knew exactly the amount of Ann's fortune. Daisy *knew* that she was going to win at the turn of the next card; she had that odd clairvoyant sense of excitement which overcomes a gambler the second before a great coup.

Night came, and presently half after nine, and the guests began to arrive, stumbling past the blind, shuttered windows of the Apothecary's shop, along the narrow, dimly lighted, malodorous hallway, to climb the old stairs, to enter the apartment of Daisy Sackville, blazing with the light of scores of candles. One by one they arrived—first the tall, sallow, handsome man called the Duke of Sebastiola, who greeted Daisy with a dark, knowing look; and then the Duke of Middlebottom's granddaughter, Lady Connie Cheviott, who was only twenty-seven, with short dyed red hair, a marvelous white skin, and the weary green eyes of a woman of sixty, bright with a bitter look of disillusionment and despair.

After her came one of the guests whom Daisy had neglected, shrewdly, to mention in her letter to Miss Van Siden—a tall, thin, transparent young man, born in that part of Chicago known as the Loop, who now had an immense success in Paris because he was the first and the best dancer of the Charleston and the Black Bottom. He was known merely as Mr. Harris.

And then the Princesse de Vigne, who bore one of the great names of France, and lent it to a great dressmaking establishment in return for gowns which cost her nothing. Where her

money came from no one knew. She was a big handsome woman, with black hair and a large, vicious, painted mouth. And after her the "extraordinary" Mrs. Brodman, a heavy, sardonic Jewess, daughter of a Soho pawnbroker and wife of an "international banker," fabulously rich, and covered with the only real diamonds and emeralds in the room.

And then the Grand Duke, who once owned estates larger than all of Texas, and now lived by borrowing money in lots of fifty francs and by what an illegitimate daughter earned by teaching dancing and making dolls. And Marina, a thin, piercing Polish woman of evil reputation—another left unmentioned by Daisy—who was a great singer, and Kadonski, a compatriot, the most fashionable of all those who interpreted Stravinsky and the moderns.

And last of all came Ann Masterson, lovely and fresh and radiant in a silver gown. As she came into the room there was a certain quick, indefinable heightening of interest, as if all those people recognized in her something more precious to them than any amount of gold, as if some strange new current of vitality touched them all. It was like the effect of a breeze stirring suddenly a field of ripened wheat.

Daisy came forward to greet the girl with the most benignant of smiles. The puffy little circles under her too-brilliant eyes appeared to vanish; there was a sudden youth in her whole manner, as if twenty years had slipped away from her too-plump shoulders. She was dressed in a gown of flamboyant red, liberally sprinkled with jewels which in a world where everything was artificial had no need to be real.

And then, one by one, Ann was presented to the other guests in the order of their rank. When the Duke of Sebastiola kissed her ringless white hand, he held it for a moment and looked at her out of his weary, beautiful eyes, with a look so warm, so admiring, and so tender, that Ann flushed and even grew a little excited.

It was a manner very different from Tony's rough, half-proprietary way. She had known only one or two Latin men, and was too inexperienced to recognize a professional manner, but it may have been too that the weary Duke, cynical and worn, greeted her with a warmth that was more than professional. Standing there in the center of Daisy's garish room, she was like a tall lily, freshly brought in from the garden.

Daisy, watching her, thought with a strange, unaccustomed burst of national pride, "Old Europe has produced nothing as perfect as this—such beauty, such charm, such perfect clothes, a figure so slim and perfect, such feet and ankles. Surely Bunny will be lucky if he marries her. Perhaps she can save him." For she saw at once that in the breast of the Duke of Sebastiola something more powerful than his need of money had been aroused.

The guests were seated about the table, properly, in the order of their rank, so that the Grand Duke and the Princesse de Vigne were at the head and the singer and Mr. Harris, the Charleston dancer, at the foot.

Ann Masterson, bright eyed and a little breathless, found herself seated between the Grand Duke and the Duke of Sebastiola. There was still enough of Daisy Miller in her to think, "If the girls at home could see me now—seated at the table with the most sophisticated people in Europe." For, unlike Daisy, she was not interested in nobility; she belonged to the new generation which is awed less by titles than by wickedness and sophistication.

Mrs. Brodman, watching her out of her soft brown Jewish eyes, said sentimentally but with a certain touch of malice, "You look, my dear girl, like a lily planted between a pair of cactuses."

The dinner began in a burst of hard bright gayety and glitter, the conversation flowing, now in French, now in English, but mostly in English, for, in this after-war world, it was *chic* to be as Anglo-Saxon as possible, even to speak French with the merest trace of an accent. There was white wine and red, and finally champagne, quantities of it, all served by two men whom Daisy had in for the evening at forty francs apiece. (Forty francs—one dollar and a half. One could never do that in London or New York.)

The Grand Duke had turned to Ann. He looked ill and oddly like a skull, with his green-white skin and the purple shadows under his burning black eyes. He seemed to suffer from some disease which made him tremble. His hand shook when he lifted his champagne glass. While he talked to her Ann became aware of a certain uneasiness stealing over her, an emotion born perhaps of the sense of melancholy and the sinister which seemed to envelop him like a cloud.

"Mademoiselle," he said, raising his glass, "I drink to you as the only young person here. The rest of us are all a thousand years old—even Daisy, for all the noise she is making."

Daisy, shaking her false diamonds, doing her best to be "the life of the party," was telling a thin pale man called the Marquis de Gotha, who had arrived late, a questionable story.

Ann looked at the Grand Duke under her long lashes. "I'm not really young," she said; "girls in these days know everything. They are quite capable of looking out for themselves."

"Youth, my dear girl, has nothing to do with knowledge and experience. One is young and one is not. It really has nothing to do with age. You are young," he added, with a melancholy persistence. "You are at the beginning. The rest of us are at the end. Daisy thinks she can save us, but she can't. It's too late. She herself is lost."

He went on talking with a sort of feverish intensity, even turning to the subject of repentance and death, and she, in her excitement over this strange spectacle beneath the sparkling prisms of Daisy's great lusters, did not understand him. Distracted, she listened, and she decided that he was a little mad.

At her end of the table Daisy still talked and laughed loudly in her game against time and fate. She saw that the girl was impressed, that she had even been touched by the handsome melancholy eyes of the Duke of Sebastiola. Near her the Princesse de Vigne, who according to scandal had poisoned her husband, was talking earnestly and in a low voice to the mummylike Marquis de Gotha. Sometimes in a brief stillness Mrs. Brodman's rich Oriental voice was heard recounting the tale of her pursuit of some priceless tapestry or picture.

But the curious lassitudes settled more and more deeply over the party. They were becoming engulfed in a strange enchantment that seemed to flow over them like a tremendous vapor. And then suddenly it seemed to grow tangible, at first vaguely, and then more and more clearly. It was an enchantment which one could *smell*.

The Duke of Sebastiola, who had been paying his court to Ann Masterson, spoke of it first.

"Do you notice a strange smell?" he asked.

"No—nothing," replied Ann.

"It's sickening—I can't eat. Perhaps it's the drains."

Delicately he sniffed the air of the closed room, and then Ann too became aware slowly of a faint ghostly odor, vaguely sweet and nauseating, like nothing she had ever smelled before. On her other side the hand of the Grand Duke was shaking violently.

Across the table there was a vicious look of malice in the eyes of Lady Connie. She had a cold air of remaining aloof from the rest of the party, as if she sat on the top of a glacier surveying all the others with a weary malice. In her flat, lifeless, well-bred English voice—a voice gray with weariness—she said: "No, I do mean it. There are people whom I would gladly poison if I thought I shouldn't be discovered."

Mrs. Brodman, a little shocked, sighed. "Not really, Connie, not really."

"Yes, people who bore me." And she gave the Duke of Sebastiola a sudden piercing look with her green eyes, a look which meant nothing to Ann, but much to all the others, who knew how dear Connie looked at cast-off lovers. "There ought to be no bores in the world."

It was the melancholy Grand Duke who answered her. He shook so violently that Ann was touched by a faint cold sense of terror.

"You don't know what you're saying, Connie. You're trying to be funny, but you're only childish."

"Oh, I don't mean any harm," the Duke's granddaughter continued. "I should put them out of the way quite gently—quite without pain—oh, quite. I shouldn't be brutal or violent."

One by one the others slipped into the conversation, all save Ann, who had stopped eating and discovered with terror that the champagne had gone to her head.

A hand had touched her own gently and with a faint pressure. It was the damp, rather chilly, aristocratic hand of the Duke of Sebastiola. The contact filled her with a sudden hysterical terror. She drew her hand away quickly. She wanted to scream; and she thought, "What has happened to my nerves? Have I drunk too much champagne?"

That curious sickly sweet smell was making her ill.

She heard the others, distantly and in a confused fashion,

discussing with a cynical indifference methods of putting out of the way people who annoyed them.

But Ann remained aloof and silent, a little confused, and blushing because she could not enter into such talk. If she spoke, whatever she said would be young and silly. But there were two others who likewise said nothing—Princesse de Vigne, who had fallen silent abruptly, and the gloomy Grand Duke, who only trembled and looked more and more ill. Before the eyes of the one there kept returning the picture of a shabby hotel room in a small dirty town in Spain, with a thin, swarthy man dying between gray sheets—slowly, of poison—with a quack doctor who talked of indigestion. The Prince de Vigne, the last of his famous house . . . he had been dead a long while now.

And before the gloomy yellow eyes of the Grand Duke there appeared a river frozen solid, with a man, beaten, bloody and unconscious, lying on the ice, while two men chopped a hole to thrust him through into the black water beneath—a man whom the world thought a sorcerer.

Daisy was saying, "I should like to poison the Apothecary."

"Oh," said Lady Connie, "but he's gone. I have a feeling that he'll never come back."

The candles burned lower among the orchids. The *entremets* were brought on, but no one tasted them—not even the hearty Daisy. No one spoke of the offensive smell. They said that the rest of the dinner had been too good, that they dared not eat sweets on account of their figures. It was as if all the talk of poisoning had made them afraid to eat.

They even seemed suspicious of each other. Ann, confused and wishing she had never come, became aware slowly that they were watching each other in a strained, hostile fashion. The Grand Duke had taken a little phial from his pocket and was pouring green drops into a glass of water.

Princesse de Vigne laughed, making a sound like bits of metal striking each other. "Jimmy," she said, "is taking drops to remove himself and save us the trouble." She reached across with a long thin arm, covered to the elbow with bracelets of false diamonds, and touched the Grand Duke's hand. "You needn't," she said; "you're not a bore."

He drew away as if the touch of the hand burned him, and

said in a low, savage voice, "They are drops I take for my heart. I don't find the conversation funny. It's banal and stupid."

There was a sudden uncomfortable silence, and Ann, startled, became aware once more of the odor. It seemed to come and go in waves.

And Daisy knew with terror that her party had collapsed, that she did not know how to amuse them any longer. Even the American girl had turned her back a little upon the Duke of Sebastiola. Even the hope of that scheme seemed to be failing. And it was impossible to say what had happened, what had gone wrong, what it was that had put their nerves on edge and set them to hating each other, herself most of all. With an air of desperation she rose and ordered the table cleared away, so that Mr. Harris—whose eyes were brighter than those of the others with the light of cocaine—might dance a Charleston.

Seating herself at the piano she began to pound out, with a false, pumped-up vigor, the wild, barbaric rhythms of "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby!" and the guests settled themselves uneasily in the shadows to watch and listen.

Mr. Harris rose and began to dance before the flower of Europe and the sound of "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby!" filled the ancient house.

Ann found herself still between the Grand Duke and the Duke of Sebastiola. The one had reasons to pay court to her, and the other, it seemed, clung to her pitifully because she was young.

The Duke of Sebastiola was whispering in her ear, "Connie shouldn't have made all that talk about poison. Jimmy was one of those who plotted the death of Stavrogin. He's going slowly mad with remorse because he thinks now that Stavrogin was a saint."

Mr. Harris finished his mad dance and fell, white and exhausted, into a chair. Daisy's loud music came to an end, leaving the room hollow and silent. There was no applause, not even a polite murmur of approbation. There was only that faint sickly smell.

It had taken possession of them all.

"I'm afraid," whispered Ann. "I want to go home."

"Afraid?" asked the Duke of Sebastiola. "Afraid of what?"

"I don't know. I don't know."

"It's that cursed smell of drains."

Ann closed her eyes, leaning back on the sofa, filled with a strange belief that if she opened them she would see some horrible thing. She never knew how long she sat there, but suddenly she heard a woman's voice crying, "I've been robbed!"

Opening her eyes a little way she saw Mrs. Brodman standing in the middle of the room, her face all white and contorted. "I've been robbed!" she cried again, looking from one face to another. "The big emerald I wore on my wrist——"

She had changed in an instant from Mrs. Brodman, hostess to the titled world of Europe, into Rebecca Brodman, Jewess, who had been robbed of a great jewel. It was not the stone that mattered: she could replace it a hundred times without noticing it. It was that she had been robbed, tricked and robbed by her ancient enemies, the Gentiles, the *goys* who fawned upon her for her wealth.

The smell rose once more in a sickening wave, and the Princesse de Vigne began to weep hysterically in short, nervous sobs.

The irrepressible Daisy sprang forward. "It's only been lost, Mrs. Brodman. It's only been lost. Are you sure you had it with you when you came in?"

And Mrs. Brodman answered in a cold, hard voice, "I fastened the clasp just before dinner. It is in this room. I am not a fool."

"But surely," said Daisy, "surely no one in this room would steal."

In the strain of the moment all the tact, the experience of Daisy, appeared to lose itself in her terror; she had said the one thing she should never have said, and in the silence that followed the words seemed to hang in the air, taking on the horrid color of irony. In all the room there were only two persons who were above suspicion—Mrs. Brodman herself and the golden-haired American girl who was thousands of years younger than any of them.

The Grand Duke sighed in a bitter tragic way, and the Marquis de Gotha tried to grin, showing a double row of unpleasant pointed teeth. The bracelets on his wrists set up a

faint tinkling sound. The Duke of Sebastiola kept silent, his sallow face turned the color of ashes. And the Princesse de Vigne continued to weep.

And then abruptly, with a gesture in which there was the echo of a majesty come down from the time of William the Norman, the Duke's granddaughter rose, and, flinging her shabby sable scarf about her shoulders, said in her deathbed voice, "I am leaving this filthy party. I can't stay any longer." The old metallic voice continued, "If anyone tries to stop me, I shall speak out, for I saw the theft."

It was Daisy, desperate and flustered, all red and ugly, who answered her. "You're being nasty, Connie—because you're jealous of a man who has left you. You're being a dirty, jealous cat. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

For one terrible second the air crackled with the intensity of the hatred, so long pent up, between the two women. Into the green eyes of the Duke's granddaughter came a cold glitter. They were like the eyes of a snake.

"What use is shame to me," she asked in the same passionless voice, "or to you either, Daisy, or to any of us? Why speak of shame in a room filled with people like us?" She laughed and moved toward the door. On the threshold she said, "Your day is finished, Daisy. You might as well give up and go to an old ladies' home. And if you ever give another dinner, see to it that the drains are in order. The smell is horrible."

The door closed. The Duke's granddaughter had escaped from the dreadful smell.

Daisy, all glittering in her false diamonds, said, "Mrs. Brodman, I will make myself responsible."

The pawnbroker's daughter turned quickly. "You make yourself responsible!" she said with a laugh. "You! Can you pay for an emerald that cost nine thousand pounds? You, who can't pay for the food we've eaten! No, I shall call in the police!"

"The police! In my house!"

"No—you wouldn't like that, would you? Though I've no doubt they've been here before."

"With a dinner of such people—a dinner of such people?" The old consoling phrase came suddenly to Daisy's carmine lips. "The flower of Europe?"

For a moment Mrs. Brodman stood in silence, her lips twisted into a mirthless satanic grin. "Such distinguished people mightn't like the police either—such people who put up with me, a Jewess, because I'm rich, and sneer at me when they've left my table. No, I want my emerald—nothing else."

In a dim corner of the room Ann Masterson had begun to weep in terror, stifling her sobs in her handkerchief. Suddenly Mrs. Brodman noticed her.

"Let her go," she commanded. "She ought never to have come here in the first place. If anyone else leaves the room I'll have the police on him. If I get my emerald back—I'll do nothing." No one stirred. And after a moment's silence she added, "None of you wants to see the police, do you? Well, what I propose is fair enough."

Meanwhile Daisy, summoning all her bedraggled dignity, crossed the room, and, placing her arm about Ann Masterson, led her toward the door. The Duke of Sebastiola rose to follow her, but halfway Mrs. Brodman blocked his path.

"You heard what I said, Bunny."

"But, Mrs. Brodman, the girl can't go home alone."

"She's much safer alone. You heard what I said."

Without a word he turned and went back to the sofa.

Mrs. Brodman was concerned only with Daisy.

She said, "Daisy, you're not to cross the doorstep—not so much as to put one foot over it."

And Daisy turned obediently as a little child, but she managed to whisper to Ann Masterson, "I wouldn't speak of this to Miss Van Siden—or anyone. There has been a mistake. No one in this room would such do a thing."

She was fighting to the very end.

There was only a dim gaslight at the far end of the hall when Ann, still sobbing and shaking with fright, felt her way cautiously along the damp mildewed walls, down the curve of the rickety old stairs. As she advanced the queer odor grew more and more overwhelming, until she could not breathe, save with her perfumed handkerchief pressed against her face.

In the lower hall she made her way carefully, step by step, toward the thin rim of light that filtered in about the door from the street outside. Abruptly her silver slipper—the one

she had protected a little while before from the pressure of the Duke of Sebastiola's foot—struck something in the darkness which gave out a faint metallic ring, and losing her balance she fell abruptly forward on her knees into the midst of a jagged tangle of tin which set up a terrifying clatter. A door opened at her side, and the hall was flooded by dim light.

Crouched there on her knees, she saw with quick horror that she had fallen into a funeral wreath made of tin and painted to imitate flowers. The odor was suffocating now. It sickened her.

Above her in the dim light a voice said, "*Tiens, mademoiselle!* You have not hurt yourself?" It was an *agent de police* standing in the lighted doorway of the Apothecary's shop.

"He has come," she thought with sudden terror, "to arrest them all."

The policeman helped her to her feet, brushing the dust from her cloak of sable and crimson velvet; and as she stood there she saw past him into the Apothecary's shop—that tiny, squalid, celebrated little room which lay just beneath Daisy's apartment. Inside, half revealed by the light of four candles, lay on the counter the body of a man. The face was gray above the tangled black beard, and the eyes were closed. Near by sat three old women, shabbily dressed in yards of crape, watching—watching—waiting—waiting—oddly like those others in the room overhead.

The policeman was saying. "It is the Apothecary, mademoiselle. He died two days ago. They only found him this morning."

She knew then what it was—the queer, faint, terrifying smell that had crept in upon Daisy's guests, enveloping them, setting all their nerves on edge, filling them with a vague suspicion and terror. It was the odor of death.

Faint and terrified, she pushed open the door into the street. Once outside she stood for a moment breathing in the cool sweet air, and presently she found herself crying out, "Tony, Tony, why did you go away?"

And then a miracle happened. Opening her eyes she saw him standing at the curb paying a taxi chauffeur. He was unmistakable. She knew the broad shoulders, the slight swagger, the suspicion of mirth that was always in his voice. She had

no pride now; she only wanted to speak to him, and without a thought she ran across the pavement and fell into his arms.

"It's all right," he said, kissing her. "It's all right. I knew there was something wrong. I've just come from Deauville. Something told me that I ought to come—the queerest feeling. I can't explain it, but I knew. I *had* to come."

In the taxicab, when her terror had flowed away a little, she said, "Perhaps it was the Apothecary."

And then she had to explain to him who the Apothecary was, and how she had seen the Duke of Sebastiola steal an emerald worth nine thousand pounds.

A little before dawn the flower of Europe left Daisy's apartment, feeling their way one by one through the dark hallway, past the little pile of funeral wreaths. The joke about the Apothecary had come to an end. The candles burned until the gray light of the morning stole in through the shutters to reveal him, lying in the midst of all his strange philters and concoctions, watched over by three old women in black who had suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

Above stairs, Daisy Sackville saw the same gray light come in at her windows. She was finished now, ruined and at the end of everything. For the Apothecary had never gone away at all. He had been waiting there all the while.

SPEAKEASY

BY KATHARINE BRUSH

FROM *College Humor*

SHE was not young. The things about her that had youth were the purchasable things: the gowns she wore, the slanted hats, the small tall slippers; the haircut, and the glint of red in her hair. They didn't deceive you. She was forty-odd, despite them. And her eyes in their sticky starry frames were as old and as tired as the world. Mrs. Jenny Montgomery.

She lived in New York. She belonged to New York so utterly, so unmistakably, that people from out of town stared fascinated as she passed, and remembered her along with Ziegfeld's new theater, and the Pennsylvania Roof, and Times Square jeweled for evening, when they went home. "Those New York women." . . . Provincial matrons, observing that her hose were sheer black chiffon, returned to report to their Saturday bridge clubs that sheer black chiffon hosiery was the thing now in New York, although the ratio of tan to black beheld by them might have been a thousand pairs to one.

To see her was to wonder who she was. Were you provincial or Manhattan born, you wondered. She had an air of being someone not quite respectable, a lady a little *déclassée*. There were her eyes. There were her slanted hats. There was her mouth, done freshly in thick, wine-red salve upon a skin dead white as lily petals. The mistress of a fat man with a limousine perhaps? The husky-throated hostess at a Broadway supper club? You could not guess. You only knew that drama touched with sordidness, glamour dimmed with shade had passed on small, tall heels in a little nagging puff of perfume.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Jenny Montgomery conducted a speakeasy. De luxe.

It was on Riverside Drive. The building was high and square, made of buff-colored stone, an apartment building. Couples with children dwelt in it, and stiff gray spinsters dwelt in it, and a man named Wilkins who solicited funds for the cause of prohibition dwelt in it, happily unaware that in the bungalow on the roof Jenny Montgomery served cham-

pagne or whisky or absinthe or what-can-you-pay-for nightly, including Sundays, from seven on.

A private elevator shot express to her door, propelled by a uniformed youth with a thin, tight mouth and a savings account. Jenny Montgomery called the bungalow Top o' the World. She had had cards engraved: *Top o' the World, Riverside Drive.* You had to present one to Wallace, the sepia houseman, who answered your ring. If your card bore Mrs. Montgomery's round, rather schoolgirl signature you got in directly. If it didn't, there was delay. But you got in.

From the roof that ran around the bungalow like a brick lawn, you could see the river, and the toy boats on the river, and miles and miles and miles of the cluttered town; and at night there were stars below you, brighter than higher stars, and the wheels and spires of Palisades Park made gilt geometrics on the sky.

It was glorious in summer. Jenny Montgomery provided hammocks and wicker tables and chairs. Drinks were brought to you there. Graphophone music drifted soft through the open French doors, and near-by people you didn't know and never would know laughed and whispered and were silent, in the gloom.

The bungalow itself had seven rooms, three baths. It was beautiful, exotic, shadowy, with purple curtains. Even in the daytime the lamps were lit, the curtains drawn across the doors and windows, that there might be no daytime ever. Three silken bedrooms. Two connecting living rooms, spacious and dim, filled with deep divans and chairs and a scattering of tables that bore beneath their polish the rings of generations of wet glasses. The smaller living room had been designed a dining room but was never used as such. One did not eat here. In the closet built for linens, poker chips and cards were kept, and a baby roulette wheel and folding tables.

The larger living room had an open fireplace, with the deepest velvet divan stretched before it. A grand piano stood in one corner, spread with a mandarin's robe, and the graphophone hid in a high carved case in another. There were cushions, huge and vivid. There were numerous copper ash trays. There were seven-branch wrought-iron candlesticks, tall as a man. The whole effect was theatrical rather than homelike. Books were missing. Pictures, too, were missing, unless you count

the photographs that lay between leather covers on a table under a lamp.

Sometimes, Saturdays and Sundays, a pianist was there, a pale, blond, dinner-coated boy, with magic rhythmic fingers. He played by ear. Played anything you hummed or whistled to him. Left to himself, he chose the "Rhapsody in Blue," Whiteman's arrangement of the "Song of India"—things like that which break your heart. His name was Georgie.

Sometimes he was asked to play the "Varsity Drag" or "Shakin' the Blues Away." And a girl would dance alone, her bobbed hair prancing, her silver slippers stamping down the beat. Sometimes a man would lean in the curve of the piano casually, his elbow backward on it and a tall glass in his hand, and sing a ballad or a mammy song. These performers were always professional; you could depend on that. Jenny Montgomery tactfully discouraged the occasional amateur, emboldened by wine, who wished to give impromptu exhibition.

She was a tactful woman. She knew everything, told nothing. Her guests enjoyed an anonymity as complete as possible. "Who's who," she said, "is nobody's business." If you asked her whether or not the mustachioed dark man in the corner, absorbed in converse with the girl with dimples, was so-and-so, she smiled: "Why not ask *him?*"

If you attempted to learn from her anything about herself, she merely smiled.

A mysterious woman. The establishment she ran had mystery; an atmosphere close mouthed, inscrutable. The servants, Wallace and Eulie, never spoke at all, except to say, "The same?" or "You may settle with Madame when you are leaving, if you please."

People came and went. Sometimes but two or three would be there. Again, all the chairs that were scattered about the rooms in intimate tête-à-tête formation would have murmuring, oblivious occupants. Never more than twenty guests were present at a time. Evening clothes were usual. Discretion, a measure of decorum, were expected of everyone. Those moved to shout and throw things must go elsewhere.

Once in a while, even habitués of the place would be denied admittance. "Madame is very sorry. Not to-night. Reserved for a private party." If you were an habitué, this irritated

you; you vowed you would never come back. But you did. You always did.

Last year Jenny Montgomery had made, over and above her considerable running expenses, thirty-two thousand, nine hundred and fifty dollars.

She lived at night. Mornings did not exist for her, and lunch was just a word. She woke in midafternoon, to three hours or less of daylight and of privacy. They were busy hours always, moving on schedule. Coffee in bed, then telephone calls, then conferences with Wallace and with Eulie. Ten minutes at her check book, sixty in her dressing room. On Mondays and Thursdays Eulie, who had once worked in a beauty parlor, marcelled her mistress's hair. On other days at this same time the tiny wrinkles were massaged, the brows were plucked, the elongated Chinese nails were manicured and lacquered red. By about four-thirty Mrs. Montgomery was ready to go out.

She always went out, rain or shine. Wallace and Eulie never knew where exactly. "Out," was all she told them. Sometimes purchases were delivered from shops the following morning, a sleeveless slinky gown of purple or of gold, to match her background. A pair of glittering little sandals, size three B. A Paris hat. A huge new lemon squeezer such as soda fountains have. Four dozen gold-lipped highball glasses.

Oftener, however, nothing tangible came of these trips, and it was thought by Wallace and Eulie, if they thought on the subject at all, that Madame took walks for exercise. This was correct as far as it went. That the walks had deeper motive, one unvarying destination, nobody who knew her ever dreamed.

On a blustery day in early March she woke at half-past two and lay a minute listening to the wind. She looked not at all pretty. A ridiculous crocheted net, like a doll's pink hammock, bound her hair, and her eyes stared out from skin that was greased and gray. She wore a flannel nightgown with a high neck and long sleeves. She was old. She had known she was old when she bought that nightgown.

She lay very still and listened. Sad wind. Sobbing wind. It beat against her small high house with savage desperation; wind lost and lonesome, striving to get in. "I like it," she thought. "I love it." It made her feel warm, secure. It was

making her feel drowsy, she found, after a moment, so she jerked herself upright determinedly, calling, "Eulie!" She had things to do to-day.

Eulie appeared and brought a negligée and mules. Jenny Montgomery shuffled to her shower. She exchanged the pink net for a rubber bathing cap, then thrust her head around the frame of the door to say to Eulie, who was selecting lacy lingerie from wardrobe shelves, "Did you go to the bank?"

"Yes, madame. An hour ago."

"Three hundred and eighty-some, wasn't it?"

"Three hundred eighty-four, sixty-three," said Eulie, the precise.

Mrs. Montgonery nodded in a satisfied way. "That game helped," she remarked. And withdrew her head, and turned the shower on.

Later, while being manicured, she asked more questions. She looked much younger now. Her henna hair was dressed, her face was powdered; she wore earrings, and her mouth was stenciled bright. Reclining among pillows on a lavender taffeta day bed in a purple chiffon, fur-trimmed negligée, she was her normal gaudy self. Madame—"Monty" to the clientele—of Top o' the World.

She held the finger tips of one hand in a dish of soap suds set upon a chair, and extended the other to Eulie, who bent over it, busily filing.

"Jensson call up this noon, Eulie?"

"Yes, madame."

"You told him about the Bacardi?"

"Yes, madame."

"Anyone else call up?"

"Miss Gertrude called, just a little while ago."

"Miss—oh. She's a pest," said Mrs. Montgomery, frowning slightly. "What's she keep calling for? I've got her 'phone number."

"I told her that," said Eulie.

There was a silence then, broken only by the wind and by the tiny scratch of Eulie's file.

"Who was the tall man with the scar last night?" Mrs. Montgomery queried next.

"His name was Smith, I think," Eulie said gravely.

Her mistress smiled a small and weary smile.

"He had a card," Eulie added. "Signed."

"I never saw him before."

After a thoughtful moment Mrs. Montgomery spoke again. "We ought to be more careful," she said. She always said that.

This day she was hatted and furred for the street as early as quarter of four. "Back by six," she told Eulie. Going down in the elevator, she hummed a little tune. She was happy. "Surely to-day!" sang her heart. "To-day there will be one!"

The eyes that from the elevator mirror returned her gaze were soft and shining in their black-starred frames.

On the sidewalk she hailed a taxicab. It was too windy and too cold to walk. She gave an address fifteen blocks away and up a side street. "Hurry," she urged. "I've got to be there in two minutes." Which was not true at all.

She had the right change ready when the taxi stopped, with a quarter for the tip. She ran across the pavement, up the steps. They were brownstone steps, with a glass door at the top that swung into a tiny vestibule. As she ascended fleetly her lifted, eager eyes looked through the glass to the double row of mail boxes. Yes! The second left-hand slit showed white. It would be dark, opaque, if there was nothing. She knew. It had been dark often enough.

With a key in fingers not quite steady she unlocked the box and took the letter out. A letter postmarked Canada. Addressed to "Mrs. Jenny Miller." That name, too, was on the box.

"*Long* one!" Jenny Montgomery sighed ecstatically, pinching.

She locked the box again and found another, larger key, with which she let herself into the house. Inside there was a small hall with carpeted stairs climbing from it. Jenny Montgomery mounted the stairs. She mounted four flights of them, slapping her letter lightly against the banisters all the way.

The door at the top of the fourth flight opened to her key direct into a living room so colorful, so sunny, that it was mental tonic just to enter. A living room all yellow walls and deeper yellow woodwork, and tiny gay canaries perching in the cretonne curtains here and there amid the green-blue-orange-black design. A small room crowded cheerfully with painted furniture, and fat low chairs slip-covered in bright

linens in plain hues. A room, you felt quite sure, where smiling people lived, and wore their bedroom slippers if they wanted to, and sometimes in the evenings said, "Oh, listen, this is good!" and read a chosen paragraph aloud.

Jenny Montgomery shut the door behind her. Her swift proprietary glance swept everything. Her eyelids blinked once in satisfaction, like a cat's. She crossed to a painted table on which there were novels between book ends, an empty bowl for flowers, a stack of magazines (of last September). She laid her handbag and the letter on this table and removed her gloves. She had begun to hum again under her breath.

It was warm in the room. Beautifully warm. A radiator sizzled somewhere. Nice to know that it made that sound when she was not here; keeping the place alive, though it was empty. This Jenny Montgomery thought absently, eying her letter. Tugging at her glove fingers, humming, and eying her letter.

She threw her coat off. With thumb and forefinger she dragged her small smart hat off by its brim and tossed it with the coat upon a couch. She ruffled her hair with both hands, ran all her slim spread fingers through and through it. Eulie would have been appalled. "Your wave, madame!" Umm—but the *comfort!* Heavenly.

She sat down with her letter. Her eyes were excited, glistening. An unsuspected dimple kept appearing and then vanishing beside the violent pigment of her mouth. The tousled bob, the dimple, gave her youth all of a sudden; she seemed a girl, made up to mimic forty.

Her fingers stripped a side edge of the envelope. She drew the pages out, unfolded them. A snapshot fell to her lap. A slender, handsome boy, dark eyed. A boy about sixteen. In corduroy knickers, a sweater marked E, a little knitted cap worn jauntily, one ear exposed, he stood at ease on skates upon a spreading sheet of ice, a hockey stick held horizontally across his thighs. He looked like an advertisement for a winter resort. He looked like an illustration from the catalogue of a Northern preparatory school. He looked, in the set of his eyes, in the shape of his face, like Jenny Montgomery. Strikingly and unmistakably.

Sitting quite still, she gazed long at the snapshot. Once she made a strange small sound in her throat, half whimper, half

croon. Once she laughed outright, tenderly. "Getting so *tall*—I can't——"

When she put it aside, propping it up on the table at her elbow, her eyes went with it, reluctant to drop away. She nodded her head to the tiny picture figure. "Was a *good* hockey player!" she assured it solemnly, in baby talk. "Was the great big captain of the team!"

Eulie and Wallace would have thought that Madame had gone suddenly mad. Or that they had.

She took up the pages. Snuggled her shoulders deep in the upholstery of her chair. Propped her elbows on the arms, and tilted her head. The letter began, "Dearest," and it was five inky pages long. "I guess you think I have died or something, but the fact is I have been so busy," etc. A page of that. A paragraph of thanks for "the check, also the cake. It got a little mashed coming but tasted great." Another paragraph, much underlined, about "the food they give us," which, it appeared, was "fierce." An addendum to this, scrawled on the margin: "How about some fudge next time and maybe a roast chicken?"

Then there were two pages of hockey, and a page-long complaint of one "Itchy" Flanders, the Latin instructor, who had "sprung a quiz" in a most unsporting way on the Monday previous. Then this:

Vacation starts March 24th and we get ten days. Bill Hardhart asked me to go home with him—he lives in Montreal—but I would rather come down and be with you if it's okay. Remember you said maybe I could for spring vacation, since I didn't Christmas? I haven't seen you for so long and I'd like to take in some shows and get a couple of new suits made including a new Tux, as this one is getting too short in the sleeves. So will you let me know in your next letter so I can tell Bill yes or no and make arrangements. Have to stop now as I am writing in study hall and it is time for the bell.

Love,
ROGER.

P. S. Let me know as soon as you can about vacation as there are only seventeen days more. R.

Jenny Montgomery read the whole letter four times over. Then she folded it and sat slipping it through her fingers thoughtfully. There was a little line between her brows. But her eyes shone. She was deciding whether or not to let him come, knowing all the time, full well, that he was coming.

They had not been together, she and Roger, since September. Before that, not since February.

"Twice a year," she said slowly, aloud. "Two weeks out of fifty-two." Her voice caught, and she closed her eyes. It sounded like so little to be all the joy she had.

But he was coming! Soon! That was the thing to think about. Her eyes flew open and were lit again. They roved the room. There he would read; that great chair was his favorite. He would sleep on that couch, as he did always when he came. "I must buy a radio," thought Jenny Montgomery. "He asked for one the last time. Radio—let's see—some new phonograph records—I must make a list . . ."

She got some paper, made a list. It was a long and comprehensive one. There were even such triumphs of forethought among the items as "hard toothbrush" (Roger usually forgot his when he packed) and "salted almonds," because he was fond of them.

She went into the one bedroom that adjoined the living room and opened the closet door. Dresses hung there in a row. Plain, dark things. Moderate. Frankly middle-aged. Clothes for Roger Miller's quiet mother. Jenny Montgomery with a jeweled, red-tipped hand took them down one by one and examined them. They were scarcely worn. Yet she added to her memorandum. "Dresses, hats, coat"—lest he think it strange that she had nothing new.

She moved into the kitchen. This was of all the rooms the sunniest, with yellow checked dimity curtains, very starched and fresh, yellow oilcloth, blue linoleum. A model kitchen that seemed lifted bodily out of a department store show window. Over Jenny Montgomery's face at the threshold a beatific expression came. She sang, tying on a gingham apron, opening cupboard doors and slamming them.

In less than fifteen minutes she had made a pan of fudge and set it on the window sill to cool. It was excellent fudge. She scraped the saucepan with a spoon and devoured the scrapings hungrily. Her satin bishop sleeves were pushed high on her arms. Her hair was rumpled as a little boy's. When she trotted to the window sill, knife in hand, to cut the smooth brown softness into squares, you caught the glint of an ankle bracelet below her apron's hem. She looked grotesque, and was utterly content.

While the fudge grew hard enough to pack into a box, she gave a telegram by telephone. "Mr.—Roger—Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r. No, M. *M*—as in *mother*——"

He had been born in the summer of 1911; and if some day he is great, and his biography is written, the writer may add, "of poor but honest parents." Certainly Harry Miller and his young wife Jenny were poor. Certainly they were honest. A tired little couple with rough deft hands and minds full of little, little things, who loved each other, quarreled and forgot it, struggled grimly for existence and on Sundays thanked God, and were more wretched—and much happier—than they knew.

They had a wee shabby house that would be paid for in six years, and they breakfasted by lamplight every morning. Harry Miller, blond, huge, looked like a Viking and was a street car motorman. Passengers liked to ride with him on the front platform. A sign read, "Don't Talk to the Motorman." But Harry talked to you. He gossiped cheerily; he philosophized; he prophesied. He had two concurrent opinions to offer on any given topic. One began, "The way I see it is——" The other: "My old lady says——"

His old lady was twenty-two years old; a brown-eyed, brown-haired pretty little thing. Nobody knew who her parents were. Harry Miller had married her out of the home of the Widow Peters, who in turn had procured her, to act as daughter, companion, and "help," from an orphanage. Her name was Jenny Chase then, or, at any rate, that was the name with which her infant wrist had been tagged when the orphanage matron found her one long ago night in the vacant vestibule.

She was a good girl, and a capable girl, and Harry Miller was considered lucky. She cooked well, sewed beautifully, scrubbed endlessly, and was faithful to him, even with her eyes. A man could not ask more. This man didn't. He worshiped her.

In the first year of their marriage she bore him a child that died. In the third year Roger was born. Roger Harold Miller, eight and three-quarter pounds. Harold for his father. Roger—well, his mother didn't know why quite. She only knew that "Roger Miller" had a sound that pleased her. She used to

try it over variously to herself. "Roger Miller, the financier." "Dr. Roger Miller." "An exhibition of paintings by Roger Miller." "Mr. and Mrs. Somebody Grand request the honor of Mr. Roger Miller's company . . ."

At the Widow Peters's, before she was so busy, she had read every book she could lay hands on.

Roger was a merry baby, plump, with blue eyes turning brown, and pink petal hands, amazing strong. "Look, Harry! How he grabs hold!" Harry said he was going to run a street car like his dad. But he wasn't. Jenny Miller knew he wasn't.

Before he was six weeks old she had a secret china bank, called in her mind "For Roger Later." There was a quarter in it at the start. Then thirty cents. Then thirty-three. Then forty-three. "By the time he's grown up . . ." Jenny Miller thought, breathlessly, schemingly.

Economy had always been a necessity with her. Now it became an obsession. She retrimmed her two hats for the second time each and stirred fewer eggs than usual into the angel food cake for the Baptist Church Christmas supper. Out of old wash dresses and petticoats she manufactured Roger's little clothes. "Don't you care now," she would croon to him, putting them on. "Some day you'll be the best dressed boy that ever was! So don't you care."

She faded a little that year and was not so pretty or so young. The small uncertain mirror above the bureau in the bedroom told her this, and once or twice she sighed. She was a woman. But she was maternal even more, and Roger's pink increasing pounds, the china bank that shook so noisily were compensation. After all, what had her prettiness ever got her? Harry, of course, but—she had him now.

Then one day, a June day, warm and fragrant (she remembered it still: the sunshine, and the song of a bird in the yard) footsteps came speeding to her door, knuckles rapped frantically, a voice cried, "Mrs. Miller! Mrs. Miller! Mrs. Miller!"

And she had only Roger in the world.

Then there was no more angel food cake. There were no new heartening *klinks* into the little china bank. There was not even a shabby house, but a single cluttered room, with a crib in the corner and milk bottles on the sill. Jenny Miller sewed. She made dresses, aprons—anything anyone wanted.

It was not very profitable. Orders, after the first gust of sympathy for her had subsided, were few. But she tried. For months. She had that to remember always, afterward. She did try.

The Widow Peters, who might have helped so much, had died the winter before. The other villagers were poor and did their own sewing, or they were rich and had it done in cities. Jenny Miller didn't blame them. She didn't blame any of them. But she learned that year the terrible casual carelessness of people—never to forget it; never again to expect or to give any quarter.

Her days were alike. The world was four walls and a window. Seconds were stitches, and hours were seams, and success was a little cup of beef juice, warm and thick and undiluted, for the baby. Or a new pink all-wool blanket for the baby. Or a rattle. Or a teething ring.

She talked constantly to Roger, tiny as he was; apologizing, promising. "We'll get out of this. We'll have a lovely home some day—and lots of toys for you—and a pony . . ." It was as though he were a little prince of the blood whom she had brought to live in poverty. But not for long! Not for very long, she kept assuring him. Something will happen soon.

The day she had to break his china bank to buy some spinach and a saucepan and a spool of forty thread she cried for many minutes, holding him tight against her breast. Cried stormily. Then just cried. Then put him down and sat there for a long time, dry eyed, staring.

One of the things she bought that day with Roger's little savings was a round gilt tin of rouge for the cheeks. One of the ways she walked was the way that led past the shoe soles on the porch rail of the hotel near the depot. Sometimes in the after years she wondered idly whether she would have walked so, if it had not been for Roger. Sometimes she thought she would have, ultimately. Sometimes she thought not. But always it seemed to her that, since there was Roger, she could have done nothing else. There were her dreams for him. Nothing else was important. And all the aprons a woman could sew in her whole life long were not enough to make dreams like those come true.

The matron of the orphanage, who had been her only

mother—and a kind one—was retired now, and living in a neat green house in the next sunny village but one. To her Jenny Miller entrusted her son. "Take care of him," she said, white faced. "Oh, you'll take good care of him? I have to go away—to work—for a little while." That little while was fifteen years.

At first she looked for a fine man who had money, who would marry her and love Roger as his own. Everywhere she went she looked for him. In cafés. In dancing places. Always her eyes strayed past and beyond her companion of the moment, looking for him. Later, she looked for money. Simply that, and all of it she could get.

When Roger was three he had mittens of fur, and a puppy, and a silver mug for milk. When he was six he had a red automobile, and a Liberty bond in the bank. He went to kindergarten and was kept immaculate with soap that cost thirty cents a cake. His guardian, Mrs. Willoughby, boasted to the neighbors of his mother's phenomenal success as a dressmaker in New York City. "You know she has a shop now. Yes, all her own. Well, I always knew she was smart!"

Once a friend of Mrs. Willoughby's on a trip to New York tried to find the shop and failed. This was duly reported, via Mrs. Willoughby, to Jenny Miller, who wrote at once of new triumphs. She had given up the shop! She was designing now for a wholesale house in the Thirties, at a salary "that is really big, and will increase, I think."

Apparently it did. Roger, ten years old, was sent to a boarding-school; the most expensive, the most exclusive. In the summer he was sent to a private camp. He grew. He acquired muscles, a handsome tan, a smattering of learning, a circle of polished young friends with tailored clothes and allowances that were large, but not larger than his. He became what adults fondly call "a little gentleman." He shot up, and the adjective had to be left out. But the noun remained.

His mother was proud, proud. The briefest thought of him could inflate her heart like a sudden wind blown in. This she had created, no matter how, this perfection, this young elegance. She was proud of his week-ends at great estates, of his easy use of grand and glittering names. On the rare occasions when, dark clad and chary of speech, she visited him at school, she was proud of his patent popularity. As time went

on she sensed a certain fastidiousness in him, and she was insanely proud of that.

Somehow it seemed to balance things a little. . . .

March 16th.

DEAR MOTHER:

Just a line, as I am writing in French class and may be called on at any moment. I had your wire, and the fudge, which was marvelous. I am looking forward to the 26th, which is the day I arrive. Vacation starts the 24th as I told you, but I have to stay over here an extra day on account of this play I'm supposed to be in, and will leave on the 25th, getting there the 26th, Sunday. Don't try to meet me, as I don't know quite which train. I'll come straight to the apartment when I get in. I certainly am wild to see you and have a thousand things to tell you and ask you. What would you think about my going to Europe for the coming summer with Randy Britton—he's the English prof—and a bunch of the fellows? I've never been, as you know, and it's high time. Think it over, and we'll talk about it when I get there.

Hastily,
R.

He was coming to-morrow. To-morrow! Not two weeks from now, or a few days from now, but *just overnight* from now! It was a song in the mind of Jenny Miller, alias Montgomery. It was a warmth in her heart. All afternoon she had toiled at the little apartment on the side street, getting it in readiness. Making it look lived in. Winding clocks, putting flowers and new magazines around. Baking a chocolate cake, a lemon pie, a loaf of nut bread—for *to-morrow!*

She had not wanted to return here to the roof bungalow. It spoiled joyous anticipation just a little to return. But this was Saturday night, big night and profitable; she really ought to be here, since she could. After to-night the place must get along without her for a time. She would not come near it while Roger stayed. She would tell him that the firm had given her ten days off, and she would be happy . . . happy.

"Purple velvet," she said to Eulie. "The one with the feathers on the hip. Here, give it to me. You go see who's out there."

It was seven o'clock. The vanguard of the thirsty had already arrived, heralded by a long buzz of the bell.

Eulie left the room. Jenny Miller made of the purple dress a cipher of folds, and slipped it over her shoulders and pulled it down. It was skin tight and knee high, with a tiny tagging train. Against the background of the train her legs were gold

chiffon, tapering prettily to gold shoes like miniature boats with her sterns set on high gilt poles.

She donned jewelry next. A pair of long gold earrings. Two antique gold bracelets, tight and wide as handcuffs. She took her time. From her dressing room, through doors ajar, she could hear voices, and presently the hiss of seltzer water into a glass, then into a second glass. Someone started the phonograph:

My one an' onnn-ly,
Wha'm I gonna do if you turrr-n me down . . .

Jenny Miller hummed with it. *Hmm-hmm-hmm-hmmmmmm.*

Eulie reappeared. "It's Mr. Williams," she said, "and a friend of his."

"Somebody new?"

"I think so. I don't remember seeing him before. Mr. Williams," said Eulie, "asked me to ask you to please call up a couple of young ladies right away. Miss Gertrude and——"

She strolled forth a minute later, vivid, spectacular; one hand on her hip where the feathers quivered, the other fingering a long jade cigarette holder. In the living room Williams stood with his back to her, beside a divan. He was a blond young man, rather pudgy and short, with absurd baby dimples when he smiled. Jenny Miller knew him well.

His companion, seated on the divan, was partially hidden from her by Williams, who bent over him. She could see long legs in sharp-creased black trousers and knees upon which was balanced the tooled leather photograph portfolio from the table, open wide. As she approached, one of the stranger's hands held out one of the photographs at arm's length. She noted, feeling vaguely reminded of something, that the sleeve of his coat was short, showing an extra inch or so of wrist.

She said, above the music, "Good-evening, gentlemen."

Williams straightened and wheeled, crying boisterously, "Hul-*lo*, Monty! How's the girl?" He put his arm around her shoulders, squeezed them in a friendly way, and impelled her suddenly rigid body forward a step or two.

"Here," he said, "shake hands with a friend of mine. Mr. Miller. From Canada. Rog, this is the famous Mrs. Montgomery—otherwise Monty—I've told you about."

He stopped speaking. The phonograph with a crashed discordant chord stopped playing; and after that it was quiet, weirdly quiet in the room.

Jenny Miller stared at her son. From the divan—he had not risen—Roger stared back. His eyes were wide, incredulous, horrified, *fearful*. Fearful above all else. "He thinks," thought Jenny Miller, "I will give him away." With a small still piece of her whirling, screaming mind, she thought this.

She shook her head ever so lightly. "How do you do?" she said, "Mr.—Miller." And she made her mouth smile.

Above the smile her eyes spoke anguished-clear, as his had spoken. "*Act!* " they besought him. "Help me."

Another atom of thought emerged distinct in her mind. She turned quickly. "Wallace! Oh, Wallace!" And when the colored man presented himself, she said, "Don't let anyone else in. A—a private party."

"Fine!" cried Williams. "Say, that's awfully sweet of you, Monty! And on a Saturday night, too!" He beamed at her. If he had for an instant sensed anything amiss, her manner had quite reassured him. "Great girl," he said. "Treats her old friends right—don't you, Monty?"

He turned to the tray on which bottles and glasses stood. "Straight?" he asked her.

"Please," she said.

She needed it. She sat down on the divan beside Roger, striving not to let herself notice how instinctively he edged away. She thought, "What shall I say? What would I say if he were—*any*body?" Her brain fumbled for words, light words and casual.

"You—you're from Canada?" she said, not looking at him. That was safe. Williams had mentioned that.

It was Williams who answered her. "Yeah, Canada," he nodded, pouring rye. "I met him when I was up there at Christmas. We had some gorgeous benders together, too—eh, Rog?" Carrying the little glass of brown liquid, he approached the divan. "By the way!" he chuckled. "He's on a train coming down from Canada right this minute if you did but know it! Here you are, Monty."

She took the glass. Her fingers carefully steady.

"How do you mean?" she lightly said.

"Well, you see," explained Williams, grinning at Roger,

"his mother lives here in New York, and he's going to spend his spring vacation with her. You know how that is, of course! No chance for any excitement or anything. So he told her he couldn't get here till to-morrow and wired me to meet him at five to-day. He's got this one night to celebrate—and he's rarin' to go. Eh, Rog?"

Roger beside her made an unintelligible sound in his throat.

"Speak up!" commanded Williams, hugely amused. "What's the matter—cat got your tongue?" He winked at Jenny Miller roguishly. "Boy's a little shy," he informed her, "just at first. But a great fellow! And it's up to us to give him a big evening."

Jenny Miller swallowed her drink.

Williams sat down, squeezing himself between them. He set his own glass on the floor and transferred the photograph folder from Roger's knees to his own. "Now," he said, "let's get this party started——"

"*No!*" cried Jenny Miller suddenly, shrilly. "No."

She got to her feet. Faced them. Stood facing them, burning eyed, the fingers of her two hands locking and unlocking before her. She could feel how pale she was. She moistened her lips. "No," she said again. "I—there isn't going to be any party. Not here.

"You'd better go," she added faintly.

"What the——" Williams, bewildered. "What's wrong, Monty?"

"Nothing," she said. "Nothing. I—can't, that's all."

Abruptly her voiced soared, vehement, loud. "It's all wrong. And I'm through with it. I'm *through*, do you hear? I'm giving up this place. I always hated it—hated everything about it."

She was looking at Williams, pleading with Roger. Groveling mentally at Roger's feet. "I mean it," she said pitifully. "Never any more. Never. I swear it. I'll scrub floors first, I'll——"

It was useless. Her eyes flicked Roger's face once and saw that it was useless, and the swift words stopped in a thin, small whimper of pain. "Oh," she cried out, "don't you *understand?* It was only so I could gi——"

She checked herself. Shook her head, choking. Turned blindly away.

"Well, I'll be damned!" said Williams into the silence.

Jenny Miller scarcely heard him. All her mind, all her faculties were concentrated on the blurred shape a little distance off that was a chair, if she could reach it, if she could only . . . There.

Williams was talking on. Demanding testily what had struck her. From the chair, through the hot moist haze in her eyes, she glared at him, loathing him. This was his fault. He had come and brought Roger, and now, because he was here, she couldn't explain, she couldn't defend herself, she had no *chance* . . .

"Get out," she heard herself say to him tonelessly. "Get out of here. Get out."

Even after she had ceased saying it, it repeated itself again and again in her mind. "Get out. Get out!" It was all she could think. Dimly she knew that Williams stood up; vaguely, without caring, she heard the word he threw at her. It didn't matter. Nothing mattered at all except his going. "Get out. Hurry. Leave us alone."

Then she saw that Roger was going too. Rising from the divan, moving toward the foyer, following Williams—going.

"Wait!" she called sharply.

Both young men halted in the foyer door. Turned inquiringly. Roger's face, stranger's face, white and set, leaped at her.

She was out of her chair now. Standing erect. Newly, desperately calm.

"Mr. Miller," she said, "will not leave."

It was horrible, it was not to be borne, that grim young face of her son.

"I—I'm sorry," he said, low. And he went.

For seconds the echo of the slammed front door filled all her consciousness, crowding out thought. Then she shrieked, "Eulie! Eulie!"

The maid came running. Jenny Miller seized her by the shoulders, pushed her toward the door. "Quick! The other young man, the new one—make him come back—tell him he must, I *must* see him——"

The door slammed again. The echo subsided, and there was stillness. Centuries of stillness.

Jenny Miller waited. Listened. Died a little.

She heard at last the sound of the elevator in the corridor outside. The door of it opening, clanging shut.

Then Eulie returned. Alone. "He's gone, madame. He wouldn't listen at all."

The house telephone was on the wall of the kitchen. Jenny Miller reached it in four seconds. "God," she prayed, "make them answer—make them hurry——" Until the doorman's slow "Hello" crept up sixteen stories to her ear.

She spoke rapidly, concisely. "John, this is Mrs. Montgomery. Listen: a young man in a raccoon coat is on his way down now in my elevator, with another—— 'Just stopping now?'" She took a quick deep breath. "Tell him—the younger man—he has left some money in my apartment. A check for twenty thousand dollars, made out in his name, tell him. Twenty *thousand*. Yes, that's right. I'm holding it for him. *Hurry!*"

She hooked up the receiver. She walked out into the living room and sat in a chair, and waited again.

She thought, "It'll take a minute or two. He'll have to tell Williams something or other. And the elevator—slow—he couldn't possibly get here yet."

She thought, "I might have made it twenty-two thousand. That's what the last balance was. Twenty-two thousand, four hundred and—— He'll come. Don't worry. He'll come. It's a lot of money. He wants to go to Europe, and he wants a special-built car . . ."

Her fingers pulled and shredded a little handkerchief. Her red mouth trembled, and she bit at it.

In a minute. In just a minute now. Don't worry—yet . . .

"I'll count to a hundred," she thought childishly. "Then he'll be here."

She counted as far as nine; forgot to count further. "Maybe," she thought, "something's wrong with the elevator."

Minutes. More minutes. How long had it been? Long enough, surely. Too long.

"Oh, God!" she moaned aloud.

Her ears strained for a sound. There was no sound. She got up difficultly, and went to the outer door, and looked into the corridor. No sound. Nothing.

"Maybe the doorman didn't catch him." She telephoned down again. The doorman's voice sounded dazed. "I told

him, all right," he said. "I told him just what you told me. But he said it wasn't his, and he went on out."

She left the receiver hanging by its cord. She walked like a sleepwalker through the rooms, into her bedroom. She shut the door and locked it and lay down on her bed. She thought, "He is gone. He is gone. He is gone."

She did not cry. There were no tears for this.

"He is gone. I have lost him. I shall—never—see him—again."

Her life was over, then. Oh, she would go on living, she would eat, and sleep, move about the world; but her life was over. Roger was gone, and she could not bring him back or bribe him back.

Or bribe him back. She thought about that. Hours she lay there, thinking, staring. Until she was very old and very wise. Until she knew at last that, though her heart bled dry, she could be glad, she could say to herself, "Well done."

TREAT YOU CLEVER

BY MARISTAN CHAPMAN

FROM *Saturday Evening Post*

MARISTAN CHAPMAN

was born in the Tennessee mountains and has always returned to them in the intervals of a varied life. While at Sewanee she wrote her first novel "The Happy Mountain." Equally distinguished is her more recent book "The Homeplace." Her short stories have appeared in "The Atlantic Monthly."

A TRICKLE of people ran from the lamplit church building that rested on the slant of Cragg Hill and were lost to sight in the murk of Glen Hazard below. Rashe Lowe lingered to put out the light and lock the door before he joined Tom Carr, his outland neighbor, who waited for him.

Tom Carr, born and raised outland, had come homing to his grandsire's place, top of Cragg Hill, and in the matter of years was grown sib with his former folk. The old Tom Carr and Rashe Lowe had been lads together, and for the sake of that friendship, as well as for this boy's pleasant own sake, Rashe Lowe was fellowly. But there was uneasiness, too, for the young man would turn again to his outland ways, and such times Rashe Lowe distasted him.

Now they dropped down and made across to the depot, dark upon the far side of town's hollow. It was past sundown of a fall evening, with a rain wind tearing at the trees that overbraedened the hills westerly of the Tennessee divide. In the long distance the wind thundered, but when the echoes went to see who's there they came back, whispering and afraid. Down in Glen Hazard the night was still, for the draft ran north and south, and the east wind leaped from crest to crest of the sheltering hillsides.

When they came so far as the station Rashe said: "'Tis heathenish for him to journey upon a Sunday."

Lighting his pipe, Carr hid a smile behind his cupped hands. "You mustn't expect Mr. Parker to feel as we do, Rashe. He's a city man, and from the North too. He very likely was not brought up to think it evil."

"Then he should have been," Rashe said. "How come he craves to be using in these parts at all?"

"He wants to get acquainted," Carr answered, reeling for a way to tell the mountain man about his outland friend. "He's writing a book about these parts and wants to get it down truly. He wants to see our country and to hear our people talk."

"Lick me!" Rashe said. "There's slight need to put it down in a book. It's ordinary."

The far cry of the night train was picked up by the wind and flung into Glen Hazard in torn shreds of sound. Carr hurried his words.

"These parts are not ordinary to foreigners; and Mr. Parker would write about us to show those who have never been here. He sent me a letter to ask if I'd put him up."

"Do which?"

"Keep him as a guest in my house, while he studied and took down matters in writing. But he'd learn a lot more if he could stay with you and Barsha. Will you have him for company?"

"What manner of man is he?"

The train slid around the last curve, creaking and groaning.

"He is my friend," Tom Carr said quickly.

"He's welcome."

No. 9 slowed down, and the heathen jumped from the step of a sleeping car into the blackness. A porter threw a suitcase after him, and the train made away with itself southward.

Carr ran forward, and he and Emmet Parker greeted like old familiars. Rashe Lowe stood in the shadow and studied the lank young man who seemed to be all made of traveling cap and black-rimmed spectacles. He watched the man slap Carr on the shoulder and saw the two prance round each other like colts in a clearing—and it Sunday night—but when Carr brought the stranger to him Rashe was pleased with his frank eyes and heartened at the strength of his handclasp. The young fellows now stopped their goings on and waited for Rashe to speak. Heathen the stranger might be, but some manners undoubtedly.

"You are to be my company," Rashe said, "since Mist' Carr wills it. May you take naturally to us."

"That's fine!" Emmet Parker said. "Where do we go from here?"

"Home," Rashe made answer simply. "I'll step ahead and leave you free." And he strode away across the town, carrying Parker's suitcase.

"What is it?" Parker asked. "Is it the sheriff? What's he mean—free?"

"Only that we may want to talk without being hindered by

his presence." Tom Carr was vexed at the tone in Parker's voice.

"Good; we do. Now, what's your game, wishing me onto the natives? Haven't you a spare bunk?"

"You'll get a lot more local color and dialect if you stay with them. If you are with me, who am still half outland, they'll sheer off you, and you could stay years without getting what you came for."

"But look here; I don't know these people."

"You soon will. Barsha, Rashe's wife, will take good care of you. All you have to do is to be perfectly straight with them. Tell them the truth about your writing business and be yourself." Carr spoke sharply.

"Fact is," Emmet Parker said, dropping into seriousness, "I am not sure myself just what I'm up to. I'm in a tight corner—not a notion in my bean."

"So you are trying to get fresh atmosphere and try your public on that?"

"That's it—local color—native American stuff, and so on. I said to myself, 'Emmet, my boy, you're going stale; you must dash into the great open spaces. But,' I said, 'where dash?' Then I thought of you, lost down here in the sticks, and I said, 'Why not skid in Tom's direction and cheer him up and roll the makings of a folk novel too?' Kill you and the book with the same happy stone. You shoving me off like this is a bit hard on you, but I begin to see it will be fine business."

"Well, don't be rampant with them," Tom Carr warned.

"Thanks for the tip; I'll be careful not to scare 'em. What are you laughing at?"

"Nothing," Carr said. "Here's your host; you drop off here."

Following the outlander's sharp "'Night, o' man," came Rashe Lowe's drawl: "A fair Sunday night to you, Mist' Carr, 'n' a kindly waking. . . . Efn you'll follow in my steps, Mist' Parker, we'll treat you clever as we can."

The rain wind tore the clouds open, and the moon hung in the space between so that the hollow where stood the Lowes' cabin was full flooded with its light. The far-away spark of Barsha Lowe's lamp looked lonesome, and the two men tasted the smoke from the cabin fire and hastened.

Barsha Lowe asked no question when she saw the guest. She rose stiffly from her chair and went out back to mix bread for supper. Church nights always ended in after-dark supper, which she hated; but, seeing there was company, it happened well to-night. She put more sweet potatoes and bacon in the iron skillet and added half a mug more coffee to the brew upon the stove, the while her ears stretched to hear the talk in the next room and her weatherworn old face puckered into a smile.

"A wild one," she told the paring knife, "but gently raised."

Padding about her dark kitchen hole, setting table and searching for a spare fork and spoon, she gathered enough of the talk to salve her doubts of the wild one. He could no more keep his body still than his tongue, and he tramped restlessly about the room or twisted to and fro in his chair while he told Rashe all news of himself. Likely he didn't know that a sudden guest should rest silent. He told how he wrote many books and now wanted to write one about the Southern mountaineers.

Barsha went to the between door to see what manner of thing that might be, and Rashe said: "Us, you mean to say?"

"Why, of course; what do you call yourselves?"

Rashe thought about it. "I scarcely know," he gave slow answer, "but never heard tell of mounty-neer. We don't cherish that in our word hoard." He turned the word over on his tongue carefully, and then put it away in his mind. "Mist' Parker," he said, "gin you're liable to write a book about these parts and peoples, you'd best come it inchmeal."

"It won't take me so long to look about," Parker said. "All I need is to gather up a few notes on customs and manners, get some scenic description, and listen to the dialect first hand."

"How many years you aim to rest with us?" Rashe asked him.

"Years? I'm afraid I'll have to get back home in a few days."

"You'll be an active man from now on," Rashe told him.

A thud against the outer door made the outlander jump. "What's that?"

"Likely the calf thinks this the barn," Rashe said. "Hit'll

find its way directly. Now, talking about all you got to do: Our manners, take the clock round, and you'll have seen all; our ways is ordinary and days follow each other easy, and like as bean seed. What's that di'lect you talk of?"

"Manner of speech, way of talking," Parker explained.

"What ails my way of talking?" Rashe asked. "Or maybe you're like a visiting woman come here one year. She cared to hear me say: 'This yere is a cheer'"—he slapped the withe rocker in which he sat—"'that thar's a b'ar,' and 'Stop thar en tell you-un's name ere I shoot!" He pointed a ghostly rifle at Parker in stage play that made the guest shout with laughter.

Barsha showed herself in the kitchen door. "I'd be obliged to you not to do that."

"My woman," Rashe excused her, "is gnarled, growing on this hard-won land and being a penned-at-home woman too. But talking about talking, you'd do better to leave our talk outen your book. I've seen a heap o' bad spelling like that in Mist' Carr's books. No one sensed what it might be. Hit's the sound o' words is different in all lands, and no print'll give that, addle it how you may. That's most of your troubles down with; now, efn you care for seeing the country, we could go out to-night——"

"To-night?" Parker said.

"There's a heap to look at, and gin you're in such a snŭd to be gone, best get on with it."

Parker waited to fetch something out of his memory and throw it away—something he'd heard about a slow and backward people. "All right," he said. "I'm game, and I'd be glad if you'd tell me something about these feuds you have down here and give me a line on this moonshine proposition."

"I'm right proud to have a gentleman talking outland English in my house," Rashe answered. "Maybe, gin you could content your mind to stay a while longer, we'd learn not to be backwoods. I might maybe could show you something, and you me."

Parker took himself around the room again, and soon roamed to the rear door and peered in upon Barsha.

"Your cooking smells good!" he roared, and Barsha carefully turned her slow smile on him.

"Likely it won't taste so to you, but good or bad it'll be

ready time your echo dies down. Don't folks from your parts ever fit the voice to the place?"

Emmet Parker laughed aloud again, and Barsha went on with supper fixments. Once, in her girlhood, she had laughed out loud like that, and the memory was pleasant. She lost herself in the past and stirred the present potatoes that were thinking about scorching.

They sat down to the table, and Horatio made his usual grace: "A blessing on us all, and may this daily bread give strength." Then he told the guest: "We fare poorly, but what is here is as your own. Use freely of it."

Native manners call for a bashfulness and a first refusing of every dish, and, upon urging, a zestful taking of all, slighting nothing that is upon the table, even though it be against your whim. Emmet Parker, not knowing this, took Rashe's words at their meaning and eagerly entered upon the meal.

Rashe and Barsha were calm. They knew by the newspapers that foreigners were raised without manners. Their silence, usual with them at meals, acted upon their guest like fire gone out. He bubbled merrily, he went off the boil, and at last he cooled off. He wondered what he had done amiss just when he began to do most right. Rashe and Barsha, given a piece of silence in which to study him, liked his clean crispness and admired his easy clothes and smooth, shining black hair.

The three looked cautiously at one another. They each broke a piece of the hot bread. They all took a gulp of coffee.

Into the kitchen hole came a shadow, cast by the main-room fire. An easy-hearted young man followed it and stood by the door, his black eyes glinting in the light from the table candle. He had a well-made head and curly black hair, all in disorder, and there was something quick and sudden about him, though he stood without moving.

"My son," Rashe said to the guest, without turning his head.

"*My* son," said Barsha, "Wait-still-on-the-Lord——"

"Lowe," Rashe added firmly.

The guest inclined his head and said: "How do you do?"

"Well, as common," said Waits in good part, "and I wish you the same."

He backed out, and his voice came to them from the main

room: "I've et up at Dena's. Couple o' rabbits I killed is hanging to the well house waiting breakfast."

Parker made sudden question: "Have you other children?"

"A handful somewheres around," Barsha owned, "and miscarried of three besides."

Parker finished his coffee in two gulps.

"Young-uns," Rashe said, "is a blessing and a weariness world without end."

As they got up from the table Waits Lowe took out from the forward room like his own shadow and stood fornenst the outer wall. There, with eye to chink, he saw his father settle for sleep, saying: "I never worry a meal till 'tis set." He saw the foreigner take out a book of paper and write fast upon the pages thereof. Saving Mist' Carr, Waits had never seen a book writer before, but he suspected them to be a powerful race of people. Waits held his eye steady to the crack, while his mind played between his ears. Before supper he had pressed against the outer door and lost not a word of the outlander's talk, and he now treddaned upon a plan to enjoy this foreigner.

"Mist' Carr," Waits said to himself, "has been sib to we-uns nigh upon three years. Owing to him we have a book writer for company. Pretty soon we'll be all swarved up with outlanders."

In three minutes Waits had set his mind, and in that time Rashe was broad awake and stirring. Waits gave a sharp whistle, and his father stepped without-doors in answer. Waits drew him to the well house where the limp rabbit corpses hung.

The two men disagreed as soon as they began to talk, and the wind blew their words away.

Waits argued: "Leave a book writer get loose and he's liable to raise hell fire. No telling what garble he'll print."

"Still 'n' all, he's my trusting guest," Rashe warned, "and his safety rests with me."

"I've no call to do him hurt," Waits said, "but before your meal I heard him speak, and from his own words he wants to know about blockade and killings. I'd be surprised but he'd admire to be mixed in a fray and see a revenue raid with his proper eyes. Do you get him a loaned gun and meet the hunt by the dead sycamore yon side Devil's Butt." He looked up to the harried clouds. " 'Tis an ill night for a hunt, and the

boys will be fast abed, but a coon hunt we'll have, and the dogs'll bay rabbit blood happen ne'er a coon hankers to come catch his death." Waits unslung one of the rabbits, and he looked deeply at his father. "You'd not grudge for us to enjoy the foreigner gin he comes to no hurt," he pleaded.

Rashe yet held back, but a twinkling was born in his deep-set gray eyes, and ere it could be quenched Waits had lit along the upward path as if his feet had known wings. The old man shook his head, but the meaning of the play was sinking into him as he stepped back into the house. And when he saw Emmet Parker still busy with his pencil, the sight of being written down made his mind set. Happen this man took news outland, no telling what!

Barsha sat by the lamp at her mending; now and again she looked sidely at the stranger, willing, yet fearful to have him laugh again.

"Likely night for a hunt," Rashe said, while he redd up a shotgun for his guest, "and being that way up I may as well look to my business." He crouched over the fire to mend it, and while he knelt there he muttered: "The old still's a-grumeling 'n' a-gawking; time I was up there seeing after it."

Parker looked up quickly, and Barsha's needle stopped halfway astride a stocking hole. For a moment the old woman was mazed, and then she went on sewing. 'Twas nought but Rashe at his play-acting ways. Barsha might wonder, but she was content to let all rest. It was a night of foolishment. The foreigner laughed out loud, and Rashe laughed back of his eyes, and now they went out to hunt coon on a night no coon could run, with such a gale blowing. Men's ways! Men's ways!

"'Tis the Sabbath," she told Rashe. "And you talk o' coon hunting. Take shame."

"Come midnight 'twill be over, and that before we're well afoot. Reckon the Lord'll notice efn we lap over a half hour?"

"Do as you've a mind," Barsha answered, "but when you find yourself in hell, don't look to me to come down from heaven 'n' fetch you out. Reckon I'll pick a quilt and stretch." And she wrapped a covering about her and went and lay down upon the bed in the corner in front of Mr. Parker's naked eyes. He came near writing it in his book, but Rashe

called on him to hasten, for he wanted time left over from the hunt to go tend his still.

They climbed through the rough night to the saddle of the divide above Devil's Butt, without speech, for all breath was needed for the going. Soon they came upon the hunting men that Waits had gathered, ten or more, milling around and beating their arms for warmth and trying to quiet the pack of hounds that fretted among their feet.

Rashe and his guest drew in, and Rashe made the tale of the hantle: "There's Waits again, and there's Morris Ott, Fayre Jones, Dite Morgan, Burl and Chadburn Avery, and the rest just some boys outen Glen Hazard."

The men growled a greeting and peered with sharp eyes at the man from city places, and all moved forward together. The moon showed for an instant and was put out like a candle by a lone black cloud.

"Efn the wind'll cease," said one of the men, "we'll maybe do somewhat of hunting."

But the wind roared down Defeat from Desolation, and the sound of many thousand trees struggling beat upon their ears. The men slanted against the wind till they drew in lee of a bankside and curved together to rest and draw breath. The stranger was gasping and strangling, till Waits showed him how to cup his hands about his nose and mouth and take deep breaths of the still air. Ahead, they heard the dogs baying in the darkness.

"This ain't nothing to what blew five year since come grass!" Fayre shouted as they set forward again. "I recollect walking on a ridge top and being turned end for end down Desolation and being carried four mile across Hog Hollow, straight as a bird would fly, and being drap in the mud patch under Barren She Mountain—yes, sir!"

Waits Lowe struck in: "Reckon we all recall that time. We laid you in the old burying ground. We was mighty sorry to lose you, Fayre Jones, and been lamenting you sore since that day."

They would have fallen to ructions, but that Waits got lost in the shadows, and the dogs, casting in the brush around, had set to a gant persimmon tree and were crying up it loudly.

"How'd they scent the critter in this blow?" Fayre Jones wondered; and a smile drifted over the faces of the mountain

men, while the stranger began to feel his gun. The men unwrapped torches and lighted them with some trouble, and they gathered close around the guest.

"Hi-yar!" Morris Ott cried out, waving his torch above his head. "See him up high! 'Tain't ne'er a coon, neither. That's a b'ar!" He pointed to the large black mass huddled among the middle branches of the tree just above the glare.

"Your shot," Rashe told Parker, while the men gathered close. "Company always has first chance among us."

They formed a close circle, back to wind, shielding the torches.

"There y'are, now!" Rashe urged the stranger. "Stand back, boys; this man's hunting and needs a free arm."

Taking careful aim at the black shadow among the bare branches, Emmet Parker fired both barrels and staggered back into the arms of Morris Ott, who stood handily waiting to catch him.

"That'll make dust o' him," said a voice from back of the crowd when the sound of the gunshot faded against the hillside.

There was a slithering crash and a man's body tumbled from the tree onto a great heap of leaves. Its face was smeared with blood, its arms and legs were doubled and twisted hideously as it twitched; then it lay still.

The stranger's face went gray even in the red glare of torchlight, and the men held back the dogs.

There was a full minute of silence. Then Fayre Jones stepped forward and stirred the thing with his foot.

"Have mercy on us! It's Waits!" he said.

The men drew about. "So 'tis," they agreed.

Rashe bent over the body. "'Tis my boy for a fact." Then he said slowly: "Still 'n' all, Mist' Parker's my guest."

All waited for Rashe's next word, hindering the dogs who fretted about in the torchlight circle.

"Sometimes," he said, "a man shoots into a tree and brings down coon, sometimes bear, another time possum; this time, it so happened, a fellow man."

Mazed and shaking, the outlander stared at Rashe Lowe; his mouth opened and shut, but he failed of words. A hand took his shoulder and he was pulled back from the circle of light. And while he was yet held silent in a fearful horror, he

was dragged into the underbrush by Morris Ott, pulled down a rocky bank into a dry branch and, soon as he came uppermost again, ordered to creekle along easy-like.

The night was full of fury and chasing shadows, and the sound of forlorn branches scratching together was eerie. From far distances the wind sounded like a blast of powder set off—a short roar that leaped echoing among the rocks. The white moon fell like a tossed coin from cloud to cloud.

This night going in the mountain country so bewildered Parker that he did what Ott said do without answering back nor questioning why.

They went over a dry falls, Ott sliding lightly and saying: "Hesh, can't yuh?" when Parker started a rock shower and came tearing through the brier vines on top of him. The outlander was yet without words, but Ott spoke freely: "Hit don't do," he said, taking his words up carefully, "to trust a man like Rashe Lowe when he speaks you fair. Likely it's common in your country, but here-among it's a sorry business to kill ary man's son. His fair words may lay your terror so's he can get you sooner, but he's bound to believe that 'tweren't no accident."

"Heaven knows, it could have been nothing else," Parker mourned, feeling at his scratched face and wrists.

"What heaven knows don't signify," Ott said. "Hit's what Rashe Lowe thinks he knows. And it's bound to be his belief that Sanders Hughett's widow hired you to kill Waits. They's been trouble betwixt the Lowes and the Hughetts since time everlasting—all the way from a jower to a fray. Last time was when I was no higher than your gun stands, and I tracked my dad up to Hughett's Branch in the trail of Rashe Lowe. Man-sir, that was a fray! They feathered into him, I'm telling you! 'Go in peace,' says Hughett's woman when she seen her man laying dead. 'Go in peace, till your boy that sleeps in his cradle box to-night is a man grown.' So I tell you," Ott ended, "that expecting all this time a Hughett would catch Waits, it's not supposable that old Rashe is going to set his mind to a happen-so."

The outlander stopped and rested uncertain, and then drew himself to the full of his inches. "But I don't know the woman. I've never been in this place until to-night. . . . Where are you taking me?"

"To a hide hole."

"No doubt you mean to do a friendly thing for me, but I've got to get back to town and give myself up."

"Who to, this hour o' night? Besides which, you're a murderer in your own right. Hit don't stand with reason to give yourself up; best have patience till you're took."

"But see here, can't you? I'm in the very devil of a mess, and it's my fault—or ill luck. I can't let this feud go on—letting it be thought that someone hired me. There's justice to be had——"

"The which there ain't," said Ott.

"—and I'll give myself up and take my chance. I can't let some poor woman suffer for this terrible accident." He spoke with the quality of one gently raised, and Ott could tell he was serious. Parker sat down upon the bankside with his head in his hands; the mountain man stood over and watched him with a drawn smile. Morris Ott was fere with him—but the man was a book writer; let him learn his story good.

"No manner of use acting in these parts like you were outside," he reasoned. "Best rest here a spell, and then I'll put you on the railroad at Robbin's Gap and you can go home and write in your book about feuds."

"Confound my book!" yelled Parker, jumping up. "Tell me the way out of this forest!" He turned about and about and met only the silence of black trees before rain. It wrought on his nerves. "Let's get back and be doing something! I was a fool to let you drag me away. I didn't know what I was doing. Take me back!"

He weaved right and left and found himself close hemmed by the brush. He tried to cast back up the way he had come and found no outlet through the laurel scrub, for down in the dark corners a man is a bear in a fell trap unless he knows the yield of the branches and the slope of the rock. His companion's solemn eyes watching his twistings to and fro gave Parker a new fear. All his little knowledge of these people roused within him, and he saw, too late, that he had laid himself at the mercy of this man.

But Ott's peaceable speech threw back this fear upon itself.

"Times the best something to be doing is just nothing," he counseled. "I'd despise to be as doing as your kind of folks.

Hit's pointing scorn at the Lord. The Lord says He'll take care of His children. Well, let Him."

Parker was in no fit mind to cap this scripture, for he was wearied out, and the bruise on his shoulder from the gun's mighty kick now took time to hurt. He looked up and down the gully and to the rim of hill crest on either side, and his nerves began to creep up and down his backbone.

And directly Ott said: "We'd best move."

For voices came to them, shouting from the upper ridge. Parker's slick shoes skidded on dead leaves and hurt him on hidden rocks. He was spent and wearied when they gained the farther hill crest and came behind a cabin shelter of hewn logs. Through the middle porch they could see a new-lit fire upon a small clearing. The snap of the fire and the smell of leaf smoke came to them, mixed with voices.

"Shucks 'n' all!" Ott said, after he had sneaked close under the clapboard roof for a view. "Efn this ain't the unwholesomest night! We've crope up on the revenue and they stalking Rashe Lowe's still. You 'n' me'd best buck down the hollow; we'll take a shape at going out the same way we come in at, but gin we meet up with Rashe 'n' the sheriff you'll never get out alive to write in your book."

Suddenly the mountain man backed, crowded the outlander against a tree bole, and held himself rigid. There was a trampling in front of the cabin and hoarse shouts of men below the draw, the same having come up from gully's far end.

"Lay low," Ott said, "and quit breathing. Creekle back easy-like and leave the brush overspread you." He buried himself forthwith, and Parker tried his mightiest to do so, but found himself the wrong shape for such a trick. His knees and elbows stuck out too much and he made a woeful noise crawling away. A shout from one of the revenue men discovered him and he was taken by two of them, who bore him rough-handed downside the next valley. A voice followed and called to them to have a care:

"Bring him in ansund, boys!"

But the next talk that came was among the revenuers about to trail themselves to Rashe Lowe's still. The men who had laid hands on the outlander dragged him betwixt them till he was foredone, and when they stopped he was gone stupid and stood harmless, waiting what might next happen.

"Rashe'll be down at the workings," a man said, "and we'd best take this man along. The look of him don't pleasure me."

Morris Ott drew close to Parker and he said: "Slip 'em and you can—gin Rashe catches you hunting alongside the revenue, after what you done a'ready, he's liable to fall pointedly out o' patience."

All in a mix, the mountain men fled to the dark corners, some chasing, some holding back around Parker, and all making a survigorous halloo, so he had no hope of winning free.

In a pocket place betwixt steep sides from which there was no climbing forth, they met with Rashe and his following, and all came together in a roaring fray. They hurtled among the scrub and the noise of shots and curses was fitten to send a man outgate his senses. Parker was thrust back through a laurel bush for safekeeping and fell into a cleared patch where stood the still.

It was the first he had ever seen with his proper eyes, and he knew it only by the worm, for the rest was an old kerosene can and a common washtub. The thing was foolishly small for such a bloody business as was going on; Parker could have picked it up and run off with it single-handed. So much he saw in the clink of an eye, when Rashe Lowe crashed into the clear patch and stood to hold his properties against a revenuer. Sturdily they twisted and fought and at last fell in a heap; the men and the oil can and the washtub all embrangled. And Morris Ott was there again and dragging at Parker to scouse out and traffick after him. And, greatly aching in all his bones, Parker went.

The wind died to gentleness, for the night was spent, and the mountains slept in peace till day should waken them. The men dragged the foreigner up and down the hard slopes till he was a fair spectacle of himself, and themselves too wearied out to talk. And they left him at Tom Carr's house.

With his tender, town-fetched clothes dripping from him, Emmet Parker was dropped on the doorstep just as morn glôm gave way to day. He was too forespent to wonder that he had been left by the way. He had forgotten his where-ats and was past caring. And Rashe Lowe, who watched the book writer from behind a handy tree bole, saw that he was only a common man, all used out and leaning against the door frame.

There was a noise of stirring in the house and Carr, all sleep-tumbled, with his hair a-fright, pulled open the door. As Parker fell within, Rashe threw his rifle to his shoulder and fired. The bullet flattened on the stone step.

"Never missed a fat mark at twenty paces yet," he said. "And now, likely, there'll be the devil to pay and no pitch hot. We'll be hearing from Tom Carr over this night's work."

And Rashe turned homeward for breakfast, measuring firm steps down the slant path, unhasting.

Night went away with its trailing robe of mist torn off in shreds by the rock crags, and soon the fields gave back a dull glow, showing that sun was about to happen. Rashe looked down to where the valley, pale yellow with dead corn, backed up the spurs, and mildly he said:

"Blackbirds circling over cut fields since corn's been laid by."

Back kitchen of his house Barsha had food in waiting, and looked a question at him that she did not speak. When he had eaten he took his sickle from its hook on the back porch and went afield, lamenting that a work day should follow sharply on a full night.

Barsha's question got the best of her at the last, and she cried after him to know: "What's gone with Waitstill?"

"Time sets all things right," Rashe called back. "Go you indoors and keep house."

Directly came Tom Carr and the scraily outlander swarming down on Lowes' house, and Carr shouting to know what all the business of the night might be, and who shot at Emmet Parker at his very door.

Barsha came front, tempered up from her last word with Rashe, and stood looking dourly upon them.

"Does a man good to be shot at once in a while," she said.

Tom Carr ordered her to fetch Rashe and edzact out the meaning of such using of their guest. "Tell me the rights about Waits being shot and a still being torn up."

These words were matches to Barsha's powder, and she set herself to mistake him, and hid what started as a smile behind a scowling face. Besides, she was yet uneasy about the truth of Waits being hurt in last night's doings.

"You got no call to come frecking me," she said. "Every

hand's while there comes a needle nose from outland craving to turn our affairs upsides. Gin he gets what he searches, what blame?" And she made to go withindoors unkindly, but when she turned the devil showed her Rashe's rifle where he'd leaned it by the door, and she thought to have her play with the foreigners. She swung up the gun and pointed it at the two, who stumbled back from it.

"You'd best morris your town-fetched gentleman down to depôt, gin he aims to lay hold of next train," she said. "One more holy minute 'n' I'll ruinate the both of you the way you've embrangled my menfolks."

Her eye fell upon Waits, now standing soundless in the scrub behind the outlanders. He winked slowly and melted back among the leaves.

Barsha made lament. "Gin you've done away with my last left boy, Mist' Parker," she cried harshly, "I'll so spoil you that——"

Rashe's voice cut down to them from the high field where he had been watching. "Lay by the gun, old woman; this judgment's mine!" And he came down to them.

Rashe looked long and solemnly at the foreigners.

"Sooner gone, sooner peace," he said to Parker. "Me, I'm not hardened to so much feud 'n' moonshine, 'n' I got aches in my legs."

"To hell with your legs!" Parker shouted. "Where's this Hughett woman and the sheriff and——"

"You'll pointedly miss your train out," Rashe warned him, "gin you aim to go visiting. Furthermore, Sanders Hughett don't own no widow—never was married, wasn't Sanders. Put that gun down like I told you, old woman. Hit's liable to go off 'n' get some person hurt."

Parker gaped at Rashe, and then, to the glory of the outland places, he laughed and held out his hand to his host. And Rashe let out an answering laugh—a great roar long saved up and fit to enjoy itself—and he took Parker's hand heartily.

"Well, sleep me standing up!" he said. "I knowed in reason you'd wear well. Come in house; try us again, Mist' Parker, and we'll treat you clever as we can."

Barsha's voice came grumbling from back kitchen: "I've already put breakfast work back o' me one time, but gin you

crave a smidgen, come on in; and you as well, Mist' Carr, so be you don't care to eat along of the dead."

For when they came withindoors, there sat Waits eating heartily of new baked bread and fried rabbit. He stood up and said: "Morning to you, Mist' Carr. Morning, Mist' Parker. Seems you missed that hasty home train. Yonder's the whistle now."

They waited till the long-drawn echo had trailed out northerly, and then Parker said: "And more than that, I missed a good shot last night."

"Thank you, Mist' Parker. I ain't damaged to amount to much; blank shot's wholesome to a man's skin." And then Barsha went out to the back porch and closed the door firmly after her, for that everlasting foreigner was laughing again.

ELEPHANTS THROUGH THE COUNTRY

BY MARY JOHNSTON

FROM *Virginia Quarterly Review*

MARY JOHNSTON

has won widespread distinction as the author of many historical romances. Among her books are "To Have and To Hold," "Pioneers of the Old South," "Silver Cross," "1492, 1922," and "The Slave Ship."

HIS perceptions were, in order: That it concerned him, that it concerned him vitally, that it involved his end of life which might, or might not, this time be avoided. These perceptions were so removed, they must cross so much of terrain to his bodily brain, that they succeeded only in alarming the latter and putting it on the alert with a painful and inexplicable interest. His brow wrinkled; his heart thumped, seemed to lose a beat, then resumed its march, but more slowly and heavily; the unfolded county newspaper shook a little in his hands.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS
THE OLDEST AND GREATEST
FIRST TIME OF SHOWING IN MOUNTAIN COUNTY
LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST
THREE RINGS
ELEPHANTS. LIONS. TIGERS. LEOPARDS. ELEPHANTS
SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT
TREMENDOUS HORSEBACK RIDING. TRAPEZE THRILLERS
CLOWNS. TRAINED DOGS. KNIFE THROWERS. ACROBATS
ONE HUNDRED FIRST CLASS FEATURES
COME TO LOCKERBY AND BRING THE WOMEN-FOLK
AND CHILDREN
LOCKERBY AUGUST TENTH

Everybody who could get there would go to Lockerby that was twenty-five miles from Last Creek and Last Mountain. He could get there. He had a horse and wagon and he had a Ford, and it was likely enough that his mother and his sister would wish to go. Sometimes he went to Lockerby; once or twice, maybe, a year, when he had business. It was the only actual town and the county seat, and the real stores

and the lawyers were there. A show could only come there, nowhere else in Mountain County. He remembered shows there. He had been just as eager to go as the other boys—or almost as eager. He didn't think. . . . He could remember. . . . After about seventeen, he thought, he had kind of lost his taste for them, and for crowds, and towns anyway. It had stayed lost. . . .

COME TO LOCKERBY AUGUST TENTH

No, he wasn't going to Lockerby August tenth.

His sister came to the door behind him and stood there looking out. "What does the *Herald* say this week, Norman?"

"It says there's going to be good weather—only it don't know. Chickens air twenty-five cents apiece."

"There's thirty ready, and I've got twelve dozen eggs. When you going to Little Town? Ma wants you to take her hook rugs to Mr. Warner's."

"I aimed to go Friday."

Both returned to silence, she in the doorway, leaning against the jamb, looking out upon Last Mountain and Last Creek and the smoke tree and the tiger lilies in the dooryard, and the ancient apple trees and the walnut tree; his long, gangling figure in butternut jeans seated on the porch steps under the gourd vine, the Lockerby *Herald* open in his hands. But presently she stepped across the porch and stood behind him, looking down upon the paper.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS
THE OLDEST AND GREATEST
FIRST TIME OF SHOWING IN MOUNTAIN COUNTY
LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST

"There's going to be a show! Let's go, Norman!"

"You can if you want to. You and Ma. You can have the Ford. Charley will go with you."

"Why don't you go? I wouldn't be such a hermit as you for worlds! That's what Mr. Warner called you, but it's just a fine name for it. I call it plain lazy—or feared!"

"Feared! Feared of what?"

"Don't ask me! I know you'll fight when somebody's forced it on you, for I've seen you do it. And you ain't scared of the dark, or of speaking your mind in meeting, or of a gun and hunting. And you can break a colt. And you ain't feared of a kind of patient figuring a thing out, and I couldn't exactly say you were feared of work. Not of moderate work. No, I don't suppose you air feared. But you certainly air a hermit!"

"I never could see the use of straying away from home where you've got your walls and your fire. It's *better* stay at home except now and then, to see how things air going on."

"Well, *I'd* not live all my life between here and Little Town and back again! *I'd* go to Lockerby every month, and *I'd* go to the City on the train for the State Fair. I ain't you, thank the Lord! Neither is Ma."

"I never did know how I got into this family," said Norman.

There were many things he did not know—he did not know—he did not know. That afternoon he went down to the mill. The mill, a small one, belonged to his mother. She had leased it, when his father died, to Jerry Wilson, and it stayed leased. He, Norman Manners, though he was forty-two, had never wanted to take it over. . . . The lease paid them enough, with chickens and eggs and small fruits, to live upon. Miranda had never married; he had never married. At the mill Jerry and Charley and old Bob Watts were reading the *Herald*.

"Going to be a show at Lockerby August tenth, Norman. Ain't you going?"

"No. Charley, I thought I'd get you to take Ma and Miranda. You can have the Ford."

"All right, I will. But why don't you go yourself? You are getting to be the solitariest cuss!"

"It don't suit me to go. That's all. A man's got a right to his ways."

"Nobody on Last Mountain ever disputed that! That's why we like it," said old Bob Watts. "I've always said and maintained that you've a right to look and go about as though you'd kind of taken refuge here but wasn't quite certain how good the hiding was! Of course we know that isn't the case, because you were born and grew up right here, and you've always been straight as this stick, though curious."

"'Hiding'!" said Norman. "Of all the ridiculous words!"

That evening, after supper, when the two women had read and vividly discussed every item in the *Herald*, he gathered the paper to himself and carried it with him when he went to bed. He slept in the small, sloping-roofed room that had been his when he was a boy. The Mannerses weren't changing folk. There was the narrow bed, and a table and a bureau and a washstand and a chair. When he set the lamp upon the table the shadows sprang and stood and leaned. He lifted the window sash and propped it with the stick. Now you heard Last Creek and the endless murmur of the climbing woods, and insect life in the dry, warm summer. Moths began to fly into the lamp. He shut the window and undressed. The Lockerby *Herald* lay open upon the table.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS
THE OLDEST AND GREATEST
FIRST TIME OF SHOWING IN MOUNTAIN COUNTY
LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST
THREE RINGS
ELEPHANTS. LIONS. TIGERS. LEOPARDS. ELEPHANTS
SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT
TREMENDOUS HORSEBACK RIDING. TRAPEZE THRILLERS
CLOWNS. TRAINED DOGS. KNIFE THROWERS. ACROBATS
ONE HUNDRED FIRST CLASS FEATURES
COME TO LOCKERBY AND BRING THE WOMEN-FOLK AND CHILDREN
LOCKERBY AUGUST THE TENTH

Standing with his hands upon the table he read it over again and with the same wrinkled brow and interest that hurt. The name of what he felt was anxiety, fear of bodily harm and death. But why he should feel that he could not tell, nor what threatened him, nor what he could or should do about it. The one thing that rose out of a sense of mist about him, or rather of a cold and wide void, was that he wasn't going to Lockerby. So long as he didn't do that . . . He put out the light, opened the window again, and got into bed.

The next morning, as he dressed, his attention quite suddenly focused upon the word "elephants."

At breakfast, as he drank his scalding coffee, the women were again upon the price of chickens and the bundle of hook rugs. "Ma," he said, as she stood beside him, helping him to batter bread, "you never got a scare, did you, before I was born, from elephants?"

"My land, Norman!" She put down the dish and moved back from him a step or two. "Well, of all and of all! No! I didn't have a scare of any kind. I ain't one of your scary ones." She stopped speaking, but stood looking at him still without moving to take up the dish. "For the Lord's sake! What ever put such a question into your head?"

"I don't know."

"I believe you! What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing's the matter with me. How many hook rugs have you got?"—though he knew how many she had.

On the road to Little Town with Whitefoot in the light wagon he thought for some time that he had escaped from that inexplicable, towering shadow and world of deep care. "I've got nothing against elephants, and elephants have nothing against me!" It was a bright high summer day, with stirring air and shimmering leaves. He felt idle and happy, and this lasted to the top of Middle Ridge.

From Middle Ridge, to either hand, spread a panorama of forest and mountain, continuous forest, and mountains in chains or broken into solitary and imposing masses. He checked Whitefoot; he always did so, just here. Below him, at no distance, lay Little Town, a mere hamlet, and small up-and-down farms and mountain clearings. Ahead rose Eagle Mountain and Hawk Mountain. Catamount River, a sunken streak of silver, divided the two. . . . There was the new bridge and the new county road. He had voted against that; roads enough already. . . . Scattered farms and solitary houses, or two or three in a group, but very scattered; so sparsely settled, so backwoods and frontier-seeming still was Mountain County, that had no railroad after you left Lockerby until you came to Caerleon in the next county. . . . Before him, beyond forested waves of earth, through a great notch in the mountains, the mind perceived Caerleon that was twenty miles from Last Creek and almost double that from

Lockerby. He turned in his seat and looked toward Lockerby, invisible under the climbing sun. All these mountains and Last Mountain. He was looking back now at Last Mountain. It had vast bulk, a long, high mountain. It stood like a wall between him and Lockerby, between Last Creek and the mill and his mother's house and Lockerby. . . .

He perceived that that feeling was back upon him. "What is the matter with me, in God's name? I reckon I'd better stop and see Dr. West."

When the chickens and the eggs had been left at the general store in Little Town he stopped the wagon before the physician's house, climbed out, and found the doctor hoeing corn. "Good-morning, Norman! What's wrong with *you?*—Come to the well. I'm thirsty."

Each drank out of the dark old brimming bucket, then sat down upon the curb. "I was bringing some chickens and eggs and Ma's hook rugs, and I thought I'd just stop. Doctor, what does it mean when a man's plain afeard for his life and all because of nothing at all?"

"What do you mean by 'nothing at all'?"

"I can't get a clear picture of it at all. I first noticed it day before yesterday when I was sitting reading about the show at Lockerby August the tenth. But I ain't going, so how could it be that? Then yesterday morning I had an awful feeling growing up around the word 'elephants.' But that's just as foolish! The show's got elephants, but it's just at Lockerby one day, and I ain't going."

"Let me see your tongue.—Now your wrist.—Now I'm going to listen to your heart, and then I'll ask you some questions. . . . I'll give you a fair bill of health. Not that you ever were, Norman, a monster of strength!"

"No, I know that, Doctor."

"It's your mind just now. Some notion or other came drifting through, and you let it get caught on some snag or other that's itself in its turn just a hardened notion, and now there they both are interfering with the natural quick run of things, hooking other notions to them and setting up a kind of dam and swirl and backwater. . . . Best way to break it up is to keep active and think of other things. There isn't any *reality* in it, you know. If I were you, I'd go to that show at Lockerby."

"No!"

The country doctor looked at him with interest. "Well, it wasn't a death warrant I was offering you! If you've got that much energy I'd certainly turn it to some account! I'd go and face my notion down. . . . Well, good-bye, Norman."

The principal family in this part of the county had an old brick house a mile from Little Town. Here he left the hook rugs. "Mrs. Warner, I'd like to speak to Mr. Warner." Mr. Warner was a bookworm and was found among his books. "Good-morning, Norman!"—"Morning, Mr. Warner."—"What can I do for you?"—"I thought maybe, sir, you had a book about elephants you'd be willing to lend me for a while?" There lay the *Herald* on a chair in the window. "Why, yes, Norman, I'll be glad to. Going to the show at Lockerby?"

"No, I'm not. But I've got a notion I'd like to know more'n I do about some things."

"That's always a laudable notion," said Mr. Warner, and stood upon a box to take down a big book and a little book.

Recrossing Middle Ridge he reached the top not far from sunset, which meant that he would be home at dark. Again Whitefoot stood still. The big view rolled and spread. Sitting with the reins loosed in his hands, with his head sunk between his shoulders, he regarded in the afternoon Last Mountain and Lockerby that it hid, as in the morning he had faced Eagle and Hawk Mountains and Caerleon. Last Mountain—there was a big one!

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS

The words formed for him, gigantic, in the pale blue heavens and the gulf of air. Each letter stood lofty, out there and in himself.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS
THE OLDEST AND GREATEST
FIRST TIME OF SHOWING IN MOUNTAIN COUNTY
LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST
THREE RINGS
ELEPHANTS. LIONS. TIGERS. LEOPARDS. ELEPHANTS
SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

The line that he had reached rushed at him with the force of a bullet, passed through him, was gone, and yet stayed.

SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

"That's it," he said, "that's it," but a moment later did not know why he had been able to say, "That's it."

It was full dark when he got home. After supper and all the women's questions he mounted heavily to his room, lighted the lamp, and when the moths began to fly against it shut the window. He undressed, and in his long, country nightshirt sat beside the table and read in Mr. Warner's books. Elephants. There was a deal about them. They seemed to have quite a history . . . old countries . . . hot old countries, cities and towers, swarming men. . . .

SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT
LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST

When he went to bed at last it was not to sleep. *Lockerby—Lockerby—Lockerby. The tenth will come and the tenth will go. It will go and the show will go. The show will go on the train from Lockerby to Wrightsville. There's a show train. It has to have a railroad track. The show will go on and Old Danger will pass.*

LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST
SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

The moon looked in—the moon looked in between the branches and showed his hiding place. . . .

Four or five days passed. Forrest Brothers must cast their net over the whole of Mountain County. Pictures of the Hundred First Class Features appeared not only at Lockerby, plastered over convenient and purchasable walls, but at Little Town and Cross Roads and elsewhere. Barbaric and gorgeous pictures. The remote neighborhoods, the folded away in creases of great mountains, the much out of hearing of the shriek of any locomotive, the served by narrow and faint roads, yet stared at these pictures.

COME TO LOCKERBY THE TENTH OF AUGUST

"Air ye going, Norman Manners?"
"No!"
"I'd like mighty well to see that elephant!"
"Would you? Well, I——"
They stood and stared.

SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

Norman jogged on past the barn adorned; then, having looked back to make sure than Dan Ellis had taken his own road and was hidden by the oak scrub, turned Whitefoot and came back to the apparition.

SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

He talked to himself with dry lips. "They've pictured you in a spirited way. But you air just paper and colors. You can't do anything. You air in a show, and the show's on a railroad and has got to stick to it. You air a big slave in a show. And the show's going to be in Lockerby just one day, and I ain't going there. I don't even have to bother about making certain nobody's going to pick me up and *take* me there. I *know* I'm not going. Then why can't I rest?"

A small boy advanced to the barn. "O my stars!" He stood absorbed, his legs wide, his tousled head flung back. Norman said, "Air you going to Lockerby, Jim Bee?"

"I ain't got the money."

They continued to look at the flaming picture. "You're so little, you can tuck in the Ford with Ma and Miranda and Charley if you want to. It's a pity," said Norman, "that anybody that wants to go can't go. I'll give you a dollar."

"You've always been good to me, Mr. Manners!" said Jim Bee. "And I thanks ye kindly! I'll ask Maum, and I'll take the dollar anyway. You know about part of the show coming over Last Mountain to Caerleon?"

Norman sat quite still upon Whitefoot while his heart made four heavy beats. Then he said thickly, "What you talking about?" As he spoke he dismounted and leaned against the horse's neck. It seemed to him that Cross Roads and the world were falling from beneath his feet. "What you saying? You're fooling me, Jim Bee!"

"It's in this week's *Herald*. I been to the post office. They was reading it."

"Reading what?"

"The advertisement. It says, Forrest Brothers going to do what's never been done in Mountain County. It's going to show at Caerleon. Not all the show, it says, but some of it. What they can bring over Last Mountain. It says they can bring elephants." Jim Bee's eyes shone, and he wheeled like a top. "They're going to bring elephants through the country. Over Last Mountain, walking along! This one walking along. Over Last Mountain. After the show's over at Lockerby they'll travel that night and in the morning they'll come over Last Mountain. He'll come! This one!"

Norman got back to Last Creek. "Has the *Herald* come?" Yes, it had. He spread it over his knees, sitting hunched on the step under the gourd vine. There it was. Garrett the editor had something to say about it—a whole editorial. He read that; then opened upon the old advertisement.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS . . .
LOCKERBY AUGUST THE TENTH

But now below this ran another line.

CAERLEON AUGUST THE TWELFTH

The paper crackled dryly under his hands. His sister came out upon the porch and was excited about the show. "Ma and I'll see it at Lockerby, and then we'll see the part of it that's going by to Caerleon. My land! Over Last Mountain. They gold-scrolled wagons and they white horses and they men and women dressed like fairies and they elephants!"

The night fell hot. He walked up and down in his room. He opened Mr. Warner's two books and stood looking down at the print and at woodcuts, then closed them and stood at the window. The moths streamed in, and the sound of Last Creek, and the hoot of an owl. "A week. . . . Then he'll be at Lockerby, and then he'll be at Caerleon, and then he'll be gone. But in between Lockerby and Caerleon he'll cross Last Mountain."

Last Mountain showed its bulk against the stars. "Who would have thought it? As Garrett says. . ."

The next day he told his mother, "Ma, I think I'll go to Old Church, to Tom Manners for a spell. I think I'll go next week and stay to the middle of the month. I think it'll do me good. I ain't well."

"No, you ain't, Norman."

"They say that iron spring of his does folk a power of good. . . . I'm just plain tired of this part of the country and of Last Mountain."

"Yes, I'd go. Change is good for folks, and you ain't never took much of it, Norman."

"I'll go next week."

"You can't go till Miranda and Charley and me are back from Lockerby. I ain't going to leave the house by itself."

It had been in his mind to go the eighth. But, of course, if he left by dawn of the eleventh that would be time enough. He'd take the old saddlebags and ride Whitefoot. Old Church and Tom Manners abode at right angles from Last Mountain and the road to Caerleon—a long way at right angles. But even while he thought this he saw that it wasn't enough and that something would happen. Old Church and Tom Manners were flimsy things. . . .

The next day he rode to Little Town, again over Middle Ridge. Mr. Robertson the lawyer had a little white law office in a grove of pine trees. "Hello, Norman Manners! What can I do for you?"

Norman sat down, planting long, slender feet on the bare floor and resting long slender hands upon his bony knees. "Mr. Robertson, I desire to know. Ain't there an injunction or something can be got out to keep show people to the railroad track? What right have they got to come *through* country, bringing their wagons and their beasts over our roads that weren't made for such? Bringing them through our streams and by our houses. Over Last Mountain and across Last Creek. I say they ain't got any right, and there ought to be a way to stop them!"

Mr. Robertson stared. "Well, you're a curiosity! Suppose, Norman, you get up a mass meeting of indignation! Speeches on the subject from men, women, and children, not to men-

tion rag, tag, and bobtail, between Cross Roads and Caerleon! Of course you are voicing general opinion?"

"I don't care if I'm not! It'd be their opinion if they had any idea about things!"

"They say that the crazy cannot detect satire. So I don't suppose you're crazy. But again they're said to be blind to a joke. So it may be that I am crazy."

"Joking!" said Norman. "I am not joking. And as for your being satiric, I reckon it's the ignorant that are satiric."

"Your mind went up then several pegs," said Mr. Robertson. "I recognize and respect the truth that you utter. But all the same I am afraid that you would make yourself unpopular with the course that you suggest. There are, you know, popular impossibilities and unpopular impossibilities. Don't choose the last if you can avoid it."

"Then it ain't possible to enjoin them?"

"No, it ain't. And why in thunder," asked the lawyer, "do you want to? Is entertainment too frequent on Last Mountain and Last Creek? Think of them on the mountain, plastered against the sky, and rejoice, man, rejoice!"

Recrossing Middle Ridge, he checked Whitefoot at the old place.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS
THE OLDEST AND GREATEST

Last Mountain stood before him. "I don't rejoice, but I got to see it!"

He felt compulsion, though he didn't understand that either. "I don't reckon I'm going to Tom Manners. . . ."

In and out of season he began now inwardly to behold that procession diverging from Lockerby through the country to Caerleon. The *Herald* had more than two of three items about it. The mass of the show was going on the railroad, on its own train, to Wrightsville. It was not reasonable to expect the mass to show in Caerleon, or to cross Mountain County to do so. From Caerleon what did cross would have to rejoin at Wrightsville, where Forrest Brothers meant to rest a bit. They wouldn't, for instance, bring the lions and tigers over the mountain. The elephants could come afoot: perhaps not all of their elephants, for they had a lot of them. Horses, too—

and the men and women who, all spangled, would ride them. Certainly some of the gilded wagons, and a part of the band, and acrobats and trapeze performers and knife throwers and clowns. . . . All of these coming over Last Mountain. . . . The road was in better condition this summer than ever before. . . . It couldn't well have happened before.

ELEPHANTS THROUGH THE COUNTRY

It was Garrett whom that sound and picture and earth-shaking tread fascinated. Over Last Mountain, into Last Creek country—Elephants. It pleased Garrett to take a saunter through geological time. It pleased him to paint them returning.

SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

Garrett, apparently, did not think any more of him than of the others. It was just elephants that made the magic for him. He had no personal stake. . . .

In season and out of season, Norman now beheld the show winding through the country. But it was not blind; it had an eye in the face.

August was here, the first week dropping away.

The preacher, Brother Abraham Wills, riding his round, came to supper and to spend the night with the Mannerses. The women welcomed him gladly; Norman put up his lean old horse and conducted him to the spare room. The preacher splashed the water in the basin. "That feels good! It's hot weather. I missed you, Norman, at Mount Moriah last Sabbath."

"Brother Wills, I'd like to have a word with you after supper."

"Surely!"

Downstairs, Norman being out of hearing, he said to Mrs. Manners: "Norman's got a kind of haunted look. What's the matter with him?"

She spread her hands. "I'm glad you've come, Brother Wills! Maybe you can kind of straighten him out! It seems to Miranda and me that he's going crazy about elephants. He's got books about them. He'll set and tell you about their

ways and how in them hot countries sometimes love grows up between them and men and sometimes hate. It's that show at Lockerby that's put them in his head!"

"He missed church last Sabbath," said Brother Wills austerely. "When a man begins to do that—— This show's a godless thing."

Last Creek was known for its good meals. For supper there were fried chicken and potatoes, light biscuit and honey, and scalding coffee. Brother Wills did full justice to all. When it was over and the two women were cleaning up he and Norman walked to the barn and then on to the stile. The west hung purple and red; a species of amber light bathed the top of the opposite wall that was Last Mountain. It was warm and still, the katydids and whippoorwills vieing, and Last Creek forever talking.

"What's the matter with you, Norman?"

"I don't know . . . Brother Wills, I feel all the time an awful sense of danger . . . an awful sense of danger, and deeps and deeps behind me, and yet I don't know anything about the one or the other of them. I don't know how I am connected with them if I could remember, but I can't! Something came into my mind, but it ain't enough. . . . Now it wasn't sufficient to be at Lockerby, but he's coming over Last Mountain. . . . I could escape if I knew how. There must be a way to escape. I've tried before but I never could. I thought for a moment that maybe you knew, but I see now you don't. . . . There's Old Danger treading toward me! the same Old Danger!"

"Don't shout! Air you going crazy?"

The two lank mountain men loomed in the dusk. The preacher seized the other and shook him. "Come to yourself, man, come to yourself! That's a sense of sin that's seized you, sudden and terrible! That's your life you're seeing and all your ways of wickedness! Let's kneel right down here and pray!"

Again at the house, the dusk having closed in and a great moon rising, they prayed again, the two men and the two women. Brother Abraham Wills read from the Family Bible, and then he wrestled long and fervently in prayer. *Lead us not into temptation. Deliver us from evil.* At intervals the women said, Amen! Amen! At last they all rose from their knees and

returned to their chairs, and Miranda, who had a sweet voice, raised a hymn. Then they went to bed; and in the morning Brother Abraham Wills rode on to Gurney's over the shoulder of Last Mountain. His final words to Mrs. Manners and Miranda were, "You get him to come to church Sunday—and I'm not of the mind that I'd encourage him to go to Tom Manners. He's a born scoffer, Tom Manners!"

It left the women unsettled again. "I reckon maybe we'd better not go to Lockerby after all. We'd better stay here and make him stay. I've always heard if you give in to fancies it's the worse thing for them."

Fifty small things arose to keep him from going to Tom Manners. But they weren't needed; he wasn't going anyway. Suddenly he saw that Last Mountain had turned into a magnet and was keeping him by its side.

At the mill, too, the men gloated over the coming show. They had already passed Lockerby in their minds, and were on the road to Caerleon. They were on Last Mountain. . . . His mother and Miranda used to come to the door and look at the bulk in the light and say, "My sakes! to think of the show coming along the top yonder!" They seemed to have been doing it for years. Time seemed as long as that, and yet night and day shifted like the spokes in a fan when you opened and shut it.

He returned to the barn at Cross Roads and looked on the picture there. Yes, that was him, that was the eye in the face.

He saw him now all the time, coming, coming. . . .

"Yet what does it mean to me? I don't have to go up on Last Mountain any more than I have to go to Lockerby. He isn't going to drop in for supper!"

At the mill old Bob Watts said that the whole neighborhood, he reckoned, would find business that day on Last. "I won't," said Norman. "I'll keep the mill for you, so all of you can go."

"That's kind."

"You mean you ain't going even to squat by the roadside and watch them go by, over Last to Caerleon? My Lord! To be just quietly and soberly crossing Last for the five hundredth time, going along lonely on a lonely mountain road, where, maybe from time to time you may have seen a wild turkey or a fox or a deer, or even, for something to talk about,

a bear, not to speak of snakes and rabbits, just to be riding or walking, thinking, or just going without thinking, climbing and climbing that on a hot day or a cold day never seems to end, or going along the long top that shows you the world with a few buzzards or hawks or just maybe an eagle, or beginning to drop down and drop down, loose and easy . . . to be just going along, dreaming maybe, and everything just as it was forever, and there, turning a big rock, coming up the road to you, an elephant. . . . You not knowing anything about it. . . . My Lord, you'd get a shudder up your spine! . . ." So old Bob Watts.

Norman looked at him desolately, then walked away softly over the black earth. Said Jerry, "If he isn't the queerest cuss!"

The tenth of August came wheeling up, seconds, minutes, hours, the total day. His mother and Miranda went to Lockerby with Charley in the Ford. He made them go; he wanted the place to himself. They weren't difficult to compel or persuade. Old Bob Watts stayed at the mill. A long, still solitude of a day, the heart of Mountain County departed for Lockerby.

FORREST BROTHERS CIRCUS . . .

THREE RINGS . . .

ONE HUNDRED FIRST CLASS FEATURES

He spread upon the porch floor the several *Heralds* and from the step under the gourd vine studied them.

SHIVA THE BIG ELEPHANT

"Nothing else matters," he said.

The gourds and the gourd leaves made strange shadows about and over the spread papers. It was hot and dry, and still, the air a blue haze. He looked up and saw Last Mountain. Something came to him out of the Bible. First and last, he had been taught a good deal out of the Bible. "I see men as trees walking."

In the evening the Ford came back with the three. They had had a full, magnificent day. Everybody was at Lockerby that could get there; they had met friends and kindred whom

they had not met for a year. As for the show, the papers and the pictures had not lied. Mountain County had never seen a show like that before. The Three Rings and the Hundred Features were there. Miranda had liked one thing best, her mother another, Charley a third.

"Did you see elephants?"

They described them, especially the big one. They had forgotten his strange scunner at them and their coming through the country. They were still excited, and tired as well, and as soon as supper was over and they could make the house straight they went to bed. They wanted to know if anything had happened in their absence. "No. Nothing you could count as happening," said Norman. "Of course, a lot is happening all the time that we take no note of."

His mother paused in her aimless wandering up and down in the room. "Ain't you going to-morrow to Tom Manners? Maybe you'd better——"

"No, I ain't going. It can't get itself done."

"Everybody on Last Creek almost is going to line up on the Caerleon road. Miranda and me thought we'd get the work done early and go with Charley to Covered Bridge. They say they won't be hereabouts before ten o'clock."

"Do what you please, Ma."

"Why don't you come along?"

"If I go I'll go by myself. But I ain't going. I ain't going near the Caerleon road or Last Mountain."

Miranda shut the front door and took up a candle. "Well, all I can say is if I was as interested as you are in elephants I'd go to see them!"

When he knew that the women were asleep he took his shoes in his hand and stole downstairs and out of the house. He stepped into starshine and the sound of Last Creek. Stooping, he put on his shoes, then crossed the dry grass to the gate and the road that carried you two miles into the Last Mountain road that was the road to Caerleon. "Roads now," he thought. "There's a saying that I've heard Mr. Warner say. 'All roads lead to Rome'—or to the place you've got to go to. All roads lead to the place you've got to reach." His brain felt very clear. "Something happened to me once and kept on happening. It isn't impossible that it would stop. But I don't know how to make it possible. Maybe it'll happen

now or maybe it won't happen, and I don't know which."

The word "placate" formed before him. "'Placate'—that means to make at peace with you. If I could placate him."

He wandered about through the dry, warm, star-lighted night. His feet knew the old paths. Sometimes he sat down or lay upon the earth. Placate—placate—placate—placate—placate. . . . It formed itself into a deliberate and ponderous tread . . . out of the big tent now, red, and on the road. . . .

When the coldest light was in the east he went back to the house. The others, too, were stirring early. Miranda, coming out upon the porch in the full sunrise, exclaimed, "You've saddled Whitefoot! You're going, then, up the mountain?"

"I don't know where I am going. I just thought I would ride."

"I guess you will see it," said Miranda. "You won't be able to help it.

"Maybe not."

To himself he said, "She spoke a true word then. I know about a candle and I know about a magnet and I know about a will."

They ate their breakfast and left the table. He put some matters from the storeroom into a small bag. "Air you going to be away all day?"

"I may be. Yes, all day."

In himself again he said, "You are telling the truth there. A long day. Yet it is possible. He might be placated. If you knew the secret and didn't indulge forever in mere fooleries."

Who was talking he hardly knew. He was at a moment similar to that moment two weeks ago when he first unfolded the *Herald* upon that advertisement. There was perception, but so removed, so faint, so nerveless and supine in the thick brain. . . . It died again. He drew a long sigh and shook his head and went out and got upon Whitefoot and rode away.

He passed the mill. "Where are you going, Norman? You going away from Last Mountain?"

"No, I don't suppose I am. I'm just riding round and round."

An hour later, having gone aimlessly for a while at a tangent from the mountain, he turned Whitefoot, and they retraced their way. At the foot of Last he met Jim Bee. "Where are you going, Jim Bee?"

"I'm going to Top Rock. You kin see them coming, three turns below you."

"It's a long climb up Last. Get up behind me."

"I sure will, and thank ye!"

Jim Bee sat behind him on Whitefoot, and they began to climb Last Mountain. "Folks ain't settling so thick on the mountain side as they are by the Creek. There's a few I hear say they are coming up so's they can get a good look down on the roads as well as when they tramps right by. But most is gathering by Covered Bridge."

No, they were not settling thick, for it was not a populous region. Norman and Jim Bee were not overtaken, nor did they overtake any, but from way up Last, looking back, they made out folk on the road. By now they could view Last Creek that in size was like a small river, and Covered Bridge, and the region people gathering on either side the creek. Norman could see the mill and his mother's house. One by one came into sight Middle Ridge and Mount Moriah Church and Little Town. The sun was well up and strong, a light haze over everything, the day promising heat and drouth. The extent of country seen increased. Whitefoot's hoof struck musically enough the stones in the road. The road had been widened this year and worked. Forrest Brothers must have been apprised of that, else they never could have granted the feasibility of crossing this way to Caerleon. Jim Bee had the talking chiefly to himself, though now and then Norman spoke. Last was a big mountain. The road looped and looped, now through ancient timber, now through second-growth, burned-over tracts and scrub. The view widened. The face of Last became cliffy; on the one side of the road, gray, wild and broken masses running up to the top and the August heaven; on the other, rock still, plunging downward into ravines and rolling forest. Whitefoot plodded on. As the road wound and climbed, it was four good miles from Last Creek to the narrow and long plateau that formed the crest of Last Mountain. "They must be over First Mountain by now," said Jim Bee. "It's a little mountain, ain't it? set by Last Mountain. . . . They say a man's going ahead on horseback to tell every body so that the roads will be clear and horses and such won't get scared. My fathers! to think of they big things in Mountain County!"

They climbed. "I reckon there's a hundred people down by Covered Bridge. More'n a hundred. And there's some folk on the road below us. And there's Top Rock away up yon."

When they got to Top Rock, that was a vast boulder poison above the road, the latter being visible from it in a great double S, up and down. On the far side of the way occurred a downward plunge of sheer cliff and broken cliff, going a hundred feet down into a deep ravine with sides of oak and pine. From Top Rock on every hand spread Mountain County. They lowered themselves from Whitefoot and took him into the scrub behind the boulder and fastened him there securely. "Horses is sure tarrified at them!" said Jim Bee. "I was most tarrified myself, over yon at Lockerby! That big one——"

They swarmed up the boulder that was as big as a small house and standing on the roof looked down upon the road up Last. The morning was now advanced and the sun grown hot. Below them came toiling up three men afoot. "That's Luke and Rob Corbin and Dave Smith," said Jim Bee. "I reckon there ain't any more but just us now."

The three joined them. "Well, I vow and declare, Norman Manners, after all your saying you wasn't coming!"

"Couldn't resist it, could ye, Norman?"

"Whew, it's hot! You might think it was the tropics!"

They sat, swinging their legs, upon a jut of the boulder.

"This is the place; there ain't any doubt about that!"

At the foot of the mountain, approaching Covered Bridge, so far away that they seemed puppets, marionettes, too small for state or significance, could now be made out those parts of the great show that Forrest Brothers had elected to send through the country to Caerleon. It was no great procession, but it included painted and gilded wagons and in one of them musicians with horns and drums, and there were show horses, and bedecked men and women, acrobats and riders and trapeze specialists and clowns, and there were zebras and several camels and three elephants. "Yon they are! Yon's the elephants!" It drew from out the woods upon the visible road, there by Covered Bridge, so very much below Top Rock. The imagination caught faint, thin cheering.

All passed into Covered Bridge, and all emerged upon the hither side, and all drew into the thick wood on the lower

slopes of Last and vanished. "They've seen it!" crowed Jim Bee. "But we're going to see it two-three times, and then right by us!"

Dave Smith grumbled. "Thar ain't much of it, and they weren't so big."

"You jist wait till they come nearer! You jist wait till that one's *thar!*"

In twenty minutes they saw it on the Old Cabin slope—just caught glints of it where the road intermittently showed; then it was gone again, and Dave Smith said he was going to sleep, and to call him when it got to the Cold Spring turn. They called him, and he said it was getting larger, wasn't it? and it was a sight now, wasn't it?

Then again it was gone, as though it had gone into the mountain.

"Norman, you got book learning. Tell us about they things!"

"I haven't got any book learning. I haven't any learning at all."

"Well, it'll be a good long time before they get here now. Call me, boys, and don't you forget it!"

The boulder reared itself part in sun, part in shadow. Dave Smith and the Corbins sprawled upon the shaded surface. There was a great view, with blue sky and small clouds gathering and parting. Norman did not sprawl with the others but sat with his long, gangling figure drawn together, the old saddlebag beside him, and his eyes upon the road and upon the drop of cliff and the treetops far below in the ravine. Down there, though hidden, brawled a stream. He heard it faintly, and it brought to him the night sounds from his window at home, when the lamp was lighted and the moths came to it. Jim Bee was as active as a cricket and did his own exploring. Presently Rob Corbin began to sing in a tuneful and powerful voice,

"Fire in the mountain!
Run, boy, run!"

When he had ended that one he tried another Mountain County song, and then another. Dave Smith sat up. "Thar they come! I dreamt it, so I know 'tis so!"

"There's the man that rides ahead!"

A man on a black horse, a man dressed like a cowboy, appeared below the boulder. "Hey, you! Have you horses and are they well tied?"

"Only one. He's fast tied, ain't he, Norman?"

"Yes, he's fast tied."

"Because elephants don't go through the country every day! And this morning the big one has got some bee in his bonnet. . . ."

He rode on, upward to the plateau that was the top of Last Mountain. Behind him stretched empty road, a little unstable to the eye in the August heat. Item by item, this became filled with the show that was going to Caerleon. Item by item, it arrived before and passed Top Rock. Last of all came the elephants, the lesser ones first, and then the big one.

"Ooooh! Look at the big one!"

Jim Bee was the only one who noticed Norman leave Top Rock. "Where you going?" he cried after him. But Norman only shook his head and with the old saddlebag scrambled down to the road. . . . The deliberate and ponderous tread. The deliberate and ponderous tread. Placate—placate—placate—placate. . . .

The elephant tenders shouted to him. "Don't get in the way there!"

But he took brown maple sugar and yellow apples from the saddlebag and came out upon the road. The elephant turned a vast head and saw him. Into each of the small eyes leaped a red spark. The showmen shouted, "You fool, there! Get out of the road! Don't you see he's wicked to-day?" The Corbins and Dave Smith and Jim Bee shouted from the safety of the boulder, "Come back here, Norman! Come back here!"

But Norman, with widened and glazed eyes, stepped farther into the road and held out the sweet stuff and the fruit. . . . But though he had the word he did not have the thing. He did not know how to placate. . . . The great beast, as though he had expected the incident, lifted his trunk and seizing Norman swung him aloft and out and, amid objurgations and shouts of horror, tossed him over the cliff a hundred feet into the depth of the ravine.

MANICURE

BY MARGARET LEECH

FROM *Harper's*

MARGARET KERNOCHAN LEECH

is the author of several novels. Her first "The Back of the Book" went into three editions. "Tin Wedding" is probably her best known story. "Anthony Comstock, Roundsman of the Lord" was written in collaboration with Heywood Broun. She is the wife of Ralph Pulitzer.

SATURDAY afternoons wrought subtle changes in the salons of Leon and Jules (Specialists in the Artistry of Coiffure). To a superficial observer all was as usual. In every orchid and green compartment a feminine form, lavishly bibbed in fresh white linen, sat before the mirror of the toilet table. Sharp little clicks came from the snapping irons of the artists in marcel. Heads were deftly molded in the plasticene dampness of finger waves. Cold cream was competently smeared on heated faces, to a murmur of "Just relax, please, madame. Lie perfectly quiet and relax." In the booths devoted to permanent waves sat ladies with heads grotesquely bristling into huge painful coronets, like Russian headdresses. Miss Nina and Miss Hazel ran back and forth. "What's the matter with that cold air?" "Just a minute, madame. No, I'm not going to leave you alone. It's only the steam, it won't burn you." In rows outside the compartments the little manicure tables were crowded. Indeed, on Saturday afternoons there were so many manicures that clients often had to be "started" on stray chairs placed in the narrow aisles, with bowls of hot soapy water perilously poised on their knees.

Whatever the subtle changes of Saturday afternoons, they did not diminish the number of patrons who thronged the salons of Leon and Jules. On the contrary, these last hours of the week supported their tradition of amazing success—contributed to explain the country house toward which Mr. Leon sped at one o'clock each Saturday in a comfortable motor car with a uniformed chauffeur. For Mr. Leon—there was no Mr. Jules, and if there ever had been he was lost in the dimness of legend—did not remain in the salons on Saturday afternoons. That was a part of the subtle changes. None of "his ladies" was expected to be there.

Downstairs in the foyer of the great hotel in which the establishment of Leon and Jules was housed swirled a flux of expensive gayety. By the entrance to the Florentine Room, a fixed point in the restless tide, stood Mr. Peter Koch, the handsome assistant manager of the hotel, smiling affably un-

der his slight mustache. Eddies of smartly gowned women broke and rippled around him. For though his connection with the hotel was of only a year's standing, Mr. Koch had already made his impression. It was inevitable, with that face and that figure, that he should have done so. Many women paused to speak to him as he bent forward deferentially from the waist, smiled, nodded, noted things on a pad. "But, certainly, madame, I will arrange everything. No, no, no, you must not trouble at all. I will speak to Louis myself, *parole d'honneur*. I will arrange it personally. It will be a pleasure to do it—for you, madame."

He would glance at Madame with his full, excitable eyes, which the large lids could veil so quickly. And she, if her companion happened to be another woman, would murmur a moment later, "Isn't he marvelous? I'm afraid it's running into a flirtation. I ought to be ashamed to let him look at me the way he does."

Under the small felt hats which bobbed in the foyer or bowed across small tables in the Florentine Room were many heads shingled and waved in the salons of Leon and Jules. But none of these women ascended on Saturday afternoons. A new invasion, unfamiliar on week days, crowded the orchid compartments. These were the women who worked five afternoons of the week. On the sixth they repaired the ravages of time and exertion.

The Saturday afternoon patrons were persons well up in the world. Here were buyers, smartly dressed and deftly rouged. Here were well-informed private secretaries, in dark woolen dresses. Here were women executives with lines of worry between their brows. They looked prosperous, even affluent. But some grade was lacking—some glaze of exquisiteness which leisure and years of infinite luxury impart. On Saturday afternoons there was none of the casual elegance of an enameled cigarette case, of a glimpse of *binche* at the bosom, of a square emerald sliding negligently around a thin finger. And it might have been observed that on Saturday afternoons the deference of the girls at Leon and Jules fell a shade short. For these women were not silken creatures from some incredible Aladdin's palace. After all, they worked for a living. They might be wise and friendly, but they were not opening doors of vivid life, they were not clear windows

through which to peep into a fairlyand of riches. The young persons with the soft names—Miss Rose, Miss Nina, Miss Adele, Miss Hazel, Miss Blanche—were a little bored when Saturday afternoon came.

Miss Nina was terribly bored. She was not the prettiest of the girls at Leon and Jules, by any means. She brushed her short brown hair forward to soften her face; for, though she was only twenty-four, it was rather a pinched little face, dark skinned. Her green-blue eyes looked surprisingly light between black lashes. Her lips were thin and avid, and she carried her head high.

But, if she was not remarkably pretty, Miss Nina undeniably had a way with her. Her figure was supple, and she had tiny feet with steep little insteps. She swished her skirts slightly when she walked. Dressed for the street in a carmine frock and hat and a plain black coat, she looked quite striking. She rouged her drooping little mouth very red, and this made her eyes look brighter and her skin less drab. The men's eyes turned as she passed through the lobby of the great hotel with her mincing, rather affected walk. It was the sort of walk which takes cognizance of the fact that men's eyes often turn.

Miss Nina was proud of working at Leon and Jules. She had striven for this job through years of initiation in lesser shops. Here she made breathless contact with something she desired, something on which her spirit fed. She looked hungrily at the women who came to the salons, appraised their jewels, their dresses, listened rapturously while they prattled of their travels, beaux, parties, appointments, shopping.

When occasion arose Miss Nina could do more than listen. She could join in the conversation—about the cabarets, the theaters. Her evenings were not always dull. To her less conservative customers—gay débutantes, lively married women—she hinted as much: cocktails, champagne, a midnight roof. Sometimes, bending confidentially over a white hand, Nina forgot that her name was really Nellie, forgot her tiny tawdry flat, forgot long evenings spent in making clothes, or in washing, ironing, and repairing them. Almost she was able to identify herself with the other woman, to please the men that the other woman pleased, to shine in the glitter of her good fortune. They sat, half whispering, like two friends. There was only a narrow green table between them.

When the long fantasy of her day was over Miss Nina slipped into her street clothes. Nor was disillusionment immediate. The carmine dress and hat were more becoming than the white linen uniform. She rouged her lips very carefully and buttoned her gloves and took her square, shiny black purse. In the elevator she was no longer Miss Nina of Leon and Jules—she was, with some faint impertinence of lifted chin, a guest of the great hotel. The moment of traversing the foyer was pure magic every evening. Through the luxurious corridor she moved, gazing about her with her astonishingly light eyes, as though she were looking for someone. Outside the Florentine Room, where music sounded and people still lingered over teacups among potted palms, stood Mr. Peter Koch, handsome, erect, deferential. Their eyes just met before she smiled at the doorman and was whirled into the street.

Miss Nina wandered around the airless little cloakroom, munching a very late lunch of an olive-and-cream-cheese sandwich. She was hoping that Miss Rose would forget that she had been gone quite half an hour; for her distaste for the ugly cloakroom was less than her distaste for the boredom of Saturday afternoon. Her mouth drooped as she washed her hands and dried them slowly with a towel secreted from the salons, with *Leon and Jules* straggling across it in green chain-stitching. She licked her thumb and forefinger and twisted an upturned sickle of hair on each cheek. Then from the breast of her white uniform she drew a square envelope, addressed in an angular handwriting, foreign and precise. There was more of the handwriting inside. Miss Nina ran her eyes along the lines, drawing in her chin with a mysterious little smile.

"Miss Nina! Miss Nina!" The voice of Miss Rose, officiating at the appointment desk, came sharply up the stairs. Miss Nina frowned, thrust the letter into its hiding place, and minced down the stairs on her steep little feet. "Your lady's waiting," Miss Rose informed her crossly. "Manicure. Second table."

Miss Nina stifled a yawn. She took from a shelf her small crowded tray of manicure necessaries; she filled a bowl with hot soapy water. "Second table, madame. Right this way," Miss Rose prompted the woman who had asked for Miss Nina. Her tone was a trifle brisk and businesslike, for even on

a Saturday afternoon this was not an impressive customer. It was less an indication of appearance than of manner. She seemed oddly confused, ill at ease in the orchid and green salons. She stood by the appointment desk, looking about her with an exaggerated assumption of indifference. But, at Miss Rose's direction, she now moved to the second table, her head raised, as one who has outfaced many situations. Miss Nina came tripping toward her; deposited her tray and the bowl of soapy water on the glass-topped table; laid a fresh towel over the small cushion; snapped on the green-shaded light.

"Good-afternoon, madame!" she said in her eager voice. Miss Nina's eyes ran curiously over the customer. She was a new one, a stranger. Miss Nina, who had an excellent memory for faces, couldn't remember ever having seen her in the shop. She was a blonde woman, with large pale-brown eyes. The light on the table struck the flat planes of her face, cleft by fine lines about her eyes and mouth. She had neatly rubbed her thin cheeks with a brickish, dusty-looking rouge. Between the fur bands of her coat collar there was a glint of metal cloth. She laid on the table a pair of fresh kid gloves and a bag worked in blue glass beads with a German silver mounting. Miss Nina quickly appraised the blouse, the new gloves, the beaded bag, the hat—blue velvet with a rhinestone ornament. There was that about them which spoke of Sunday, of occasion. Tissue paper seemed to rustle faintly around them. They were her "best" things. Miss Nina's upper lip curled slightly, briefly, as she took the woman's left hand, a capable hand with large shapely nails. She ran her file experimentally around the littlest one.

"Not much shorter, madame?" she suggested. The woman shook her head.

"You have very lovely nails. Very lovely nails, madame," said Miss Nina absently. With mechanical skill the long file moved around the nails, shaping them. The left hand, the finger tips dabbed with salve, was consigned to the bowl of water. Miss Nina shifted her shoulders, glanced cursorily at the customers seated at the other manicure tables. She took up the right hand, smothering another yawn.

The woman spoke so suddenly that Miss Nina was startled. Her voice had a queer husky quality, very pleasant. "Do you know a girl named Adele that used to work here?"

"Why, yes," said Miss Nina, and bit her lip. "Why, yes, of course. Yes, Adele was here for a good while, I guess, about a year or two."

"She's not here any more, is she? Do you ever see her?" pursued the woman. Her large hazel eyes were fixed on Miss Nina's face.

The girl looked up briefly. "No," she said, twisting a fragment of cotton around an orange-wood stick. "Not any more. Not for—oh, two or three months. I haven't seen her since she left."

"You didn't know her very well?" asked the woman, and again Miss Nina looked at her.

"Why, yes—" she began hesitatingly. Then she gave a little laugh and leaned confidentially over the woman's hand. "Why, I'll tell you how it was, madame. Adele was my girl friend. Then we had a little fuss. She said something I didn't like. Will you have the white under your nails? We don't talk now." Miss Nina poked among the articles on her tray for an emery board. "You knew Adele, madame? I mean, you were one of her customers? I didn't think——"

"No," said the blonde woman. "I've never been here before. Quite some place you have, isn't it? I've never seen this Adele. But I've heard about her." She lowered her eyes, raised them again, moistening her lips. "I heard she got in some trouble here," she said, and waited.

"Well!" Miss Nina threw back her head with an explosive little laugh. "What do you think of that? Well, some people say more than their prayers."

"I heard," said the blonde woman softly, "that Adele did."

"Oh, no, no." Miss Nina deprecated the entire report. "There isn't anything to that. Why, I can't believe there's anything to that. She just wanted a new place, madame. Some place handier to where she lives."

The woman shook her head slowly. "No. That wasn't it. She got in trouble on account of some man here in the hotel. She *had* to leave."

Miss Nina drew a quick breath. Her eyes darted about the shop. A drying machine whirred behind the curtains of the nearest compartment. There was a chatter of conversation. At near-by tables Miss Blanche and Miss Myrtle bent over

their customers' hands. Their backs were concentrated, oblivious. Calmly above them lay a soft haze of cigarette smoke. Miss Nina picked up her orange-wood stick.

"Well, madame," she murmured, "you know all about it, don't you? Would you put your other hand in the water, please? I did hear some gossip myself, but I don't think there was anything to it. Nothing wrong, I mean, madame. Nothing really wrong."

"Foolish girl, wasn't she?" said the blonde woman. "Going up to his room here in the hotel and all. She might have known they'd find out."

Nina conceded the wisdom of this with a hunching of her shoulders and a sympathetlic smile. "Well, of course, you know, madame"—her voice had dropped to an eager whisper —"some girls never think how things look. You know how they are, madame. That's what I always told Adele, she'd get in trouble if she didn't look out. I like a good time myself. But the idea, can you imagine, going to a man's room, in a hotel like this, too, where they're so careful. They have to be." Miss Nina paused, while she ran a soapy brush over the nicely groomed nails of the woman's left hand. "Will you have the medium polish, madame? Or do you prefer the very red?" Her fingers quivered among the bottles, chose on instruction the very red. She drew out the cork, with its tiny pendant brush, and began to paint the neat finger nails.

"I got disgusted with her," Miss Nina resumed. "That's how we came to have this falling out I spoke of. Going up to his room!" Miss Nina sniffed.

The blonde woman raised her hand, gazed intently at the shining red nails. "I suppose," she said. "you've seen this man she went with?"

"Seen him?" said Miss Nina. "Oh, yes. Yes, indeed, I've seen him." She cleared her throat. "Well, you see, madame, Adele and I had a little apartment together last year. East Thirty-first Street. A nice little place. This man—this friend of Adele's—used to come there, see? Then sometimes, you know, my boy friend would be there, and the four of us would go out somewheres, to dinner or a show or to dance somewheres. That's the way I got to know him. Of course, I wasn't paying any attention to him. I had a friend of my own." Miss Nina moved her shoulders expressing hauteur. "I could

see all along he was getting sick of Adele. She was just crazy about him. Silly over him. And here he was with his wife and all——"

"So he has a wife?" said the woman. And her eyes opened very wide as she stared at the five red, shining nails of her left hand.

"Oh, sure." said Miss Nina. "I should say so. Believe me, he has a wife. Very delicate. Just relax your hand a little, madame. She's a very delicate woman. Lives in the country, New Jersey some place. If you could just let your hand lie quiet—that's better, thank you, madame. She's crazy about him. At least, that's what Adele used to say. He's just got to be home certain nights in the week. He has three children, too. He thinks the world of them. Quite a family man." Miss Nina laughed.

"Yes," said the woman. "It would seem that way. Well, that's hard on a man, a nagging wife."

Miss Nina was voluble, eager. "Yes, madame, that's just what I used to tell Adele. 'Adele,' I used to say to her, 'there's no use *your* nagging at him; he's got one like that already.' And I told her, 'He's a married man, that'll never bring you luck.' But she said, 'If you like them, what can you do?'"

The woman uttered a little exclamation that was not quite a laugh. But Miss Nina did not heed. "Well, finally, she heard about Adele—the wife did. So he came to Adele and told her she'd have to leave and go some place else, because his wife, see, would make trouble if she stayed here. So that was how it happened. That's the whole story."

"Yes," said the blonde woman. "Yes, that's what I heard happened. I live in Brooklyn, and I heard about it from friends of her married sister's. I heard she got going out with this man, and then she lost her place. They all thought it was too bad, she was such a nice girl." She leaned forward across the narrow table, her lips parted. "There couldn't—you're sure that was what happened, that his wife found out about it? You couldn't be wrong about that?"

"No, I'm sure," said Miss Nina. She snipped her little scissors delicately, decisively. "Sure that was what happened. He was always scared to death his wife would find out. Why, sometimes he used to break dates the last minute. She's sick,

see, and she gets suspicious. I guess she gave it to him all right."

The woman sighed. "I wonder," she said, "if Adele ever sees him now?"

"No," said Miss Nina quickly. "No, she doesn't see him any more. Hasn't seen him since she left."

"But I thought," said the blonde woman in a puzzled tone, "that you and Adele weren't friends any more? How would you know if she saw him or not? You wouldn't—" she hesitated—"I don't suppose *you* ever see him, do you? To talk to, I mean?"

"Me?" cried Miss Nina. "Why, no. No, I'd never dream—— Why, what made you think——?" She laid down her small sharp scissors and ran her fingers quickly across her upper lip. The blonde woman's eyes were lowered. They stared intently at the middle finger of her right hand. And, following her gaze, Miss Nina's eyes rested on a scarlet speck beside the finger nail, which grew to a tiny bubble of blood, spreading across the whiteness of the finger. "Oh, madame, I'm so sorry! How stupid of me! I don't know when I've done such a thing." With tremulous fingers she took the cork from a bottle of colorless fluid and moistened a scrap of cotton which she pressed against the tiny wound. "Terribly sorry, madame. I —I must be nervous to-day."

"That's all right," said the woman. Her voice was low and quiet. "We all make mistakes. I'm afraid I've upset you, talking about your girl friend. We'll drop the subject if you'd rather."

Miss Nina pressed her palms to her cheeks. "It upsets me awfully to cut a customer. No, no, madame, why should I mind talking about Adele? She's nothing to me any more. I don't care what she does. You needn't worry over her. She's got somebody else by now. She never cares long for anybody. That's why I was so sure, see, that she doesn't meet this man any more. Ah, you don't know what a fool she is!" Miss Nina's mouth was bitter. "Going up to his room here! If she had to see him, why couldn't she meet him some place else? I knew she'd get in trouble. I *told* her, 'Adele,' I said, 'a manager of a hotel has his position to consider. A big hotel like this, you want to be careful about going up there to see him; he can't always be telling you, don't come up to my

room—how does that look for a man, to be the one to be careful?'" Miss Nina was breathing fast. "I'll tell you what's the trouble with Adele, madame. She's too easy. That's why, see, I know they don't see each other any more. A man gets sick of that, believe me."

The blonde woman bent her head. "Well, I should blame her," she said. "I should blame her. I guess every woman's been easy one time anyway—or wished she'd had the chance to be. I was easy once myself," she whispered, and her hand twitched in Miss Nina's clasp. "One time I was cashier in a hotel. There was a handsome fellow was one of the day clerks." She smiled wryly. "Well——"

She caught her lip between her teeth, with a long intake of breath, as though she were nerving herself to go on. "I fell for him," she said slowly. "A ton of bricks. I was nutty about him. His manners, you know. Always so polite and like that. He used to write me notes, lovely handwriting, like a copy book. He was educated in Europe. I'd carry those notes around with me for days—read them over and over again. He was crazy for women." She gave a nervous laugh of apology. "I thought he was crazy for me. Funny, isn't it? That's a mistake a lot of women make. Well—" After a minute she went on—"He had a wife. She was awfully delicate. That made her nagging and suspicious of him—the way they get. He couldn't bear to hurt her. And then there were the kids. He was so fond of his kids."

Miss Nina had stiffened. A confused hostility was hot in her narrowed eyes. Meeting that gaze, the woman flinched, looked away. Her lips trembled, and she bit at them to make them steady. "I stuck to him for six years," she said. "Six years out of my life. You wouldn't believe it. Every thought I had for that man, every breath I drew."

Miss Nina ran the scrub brush over the fingers of the woman's hand. Chill soapy water dripped through the fingers. Miss Nina squeezed them briefly in a towel.

"It's a bad thing to happen to a girl," said the woman. Her eyes were fastened on Miss Nina with a quivering intensity. They seemed to implore her to understand, to respond. But Miss Nina's eyes were as blank as two bits of pale-blue glass. "It's a bad thing," the woman went on, "getting mixed up with a married man. It gets a girl a bad name around. I

could have married—oh, easy—before I got to going with this fellow. But after—well, after, it was different. No man's going to wait for a woman six years. Not these days. You can't blame them. And with the talk and all. There's always talk."

Miss Nina painted the last finger of the right hand with the very red polish. She thrust the cork into the bottle, busied herself with tidying her tray of small articles. The woman opened her beaded bag awkwardly with her left hand and took from it a mirror and a powder puff in a figured-silk handkerchief. She powdered her nose and straightened her hat. "Of course, I'm not out of the running yet," she said. She snapped her bag shut and took up her new gloves. She laughed lightly. "No, sir, I haven't given up hope yet."

But as she hesitated to rise it became clear that she had not yet finished. She was mustering the courage to go on. There was a minute of painful silence. "There's just one thing," she at least admitted. "I—I'm sorry you aren't friends with Adele any more. Because I was hoping you could take her a message from me. I—I got a feeling I wanted to tell her something."

Miss Nina had raised her tray. Now she set it down with a clatter. She took the edge of the table in both hands. "Tell me," she whispered. The light from the lamp flickered sharply in her eyes. "Tell me," she repeated.

"Well, you see, I guess I know him better than you do. This man Koch——" The name fell like a stone between them. And, seeing that the woman's face was white, Nina started sharply. In her thin young throat muscles twitched.

"Oh, my God!" said Nina. "You—you're not——"

For a moment they faced each other. Then the blonde woman understood. "No," she said, "I'm not. My God, do I look like a delicate wife? No, dearie, I never made it. But what I wanted to tell you was about her—Koch's wife. This sick wife of his that he can't bear to hurt." The woman swallowed, as though it hurt her. "She died four years ago," she said. "I happen to know that. You see? Well, that's all."

She did not look at Miss Nina now, stared instead at her new gloves and the blue-beaded bag. "He really did have the sick wife when I knew him. Yes, and the kids, too. Her family took them when she died. I guess he couldn't bear the

idea of losing her," she said with a dreary smile. "She came in so—handy."

The woman rose, moved toward the cashier's desk, her head raised, as one who has outfaced many situations. With uncertain fingers she fumbled in her bag for a crumpled bill. Outside the orchid and green salons she paused in the gloomy carpeted silence of the hotel corridor. Almost she turned back. Her lips twisted. She clenched her hands, turning her head in a panic of regret. Suddenly she pressed her stiffened palms over her eyes. She did not hear Miss Nina coming until she stood beside her.

"Oh," cried the blonde woman. There were tears in her big hazel eyes. "Oh, I shouldn't have told you. I did wrong to tell you. It's none of my business, I know, what you do. But I got so's I couldn't sleep, thinking of him giving out he was a married man—getting away with it time after time—other girls suffering the way he made me suffer." Tears spilled down her thin cheeks, across the dusty pink areas of rouge. She brushed them away angrily.

"I'm glad you told me," said Miss Nina in a queer little voice. Her aquamarine eyes were very light in her drab face. "I only wish," she said slowly, "I only wish I had of known before."

The woman laid one hand on Miss Nina's arm. "Listen," she implored her. "Would you take a piece of advice? I'm older than you. Don't let this break your heart, dear. Go back to that boy friend you talked about. You get married, hear me? That's the only thing for a woman to do, get married——"

"Boy friend?" cried Miss Nina. She spat out the word in disgust. "Married? Say, what's getting married? Kids. No clothes. No fun. Washing and ironing, and mending his clothes instead of just your own. Cooking and cleaning and losing your looks. And him not as nice to you as before you were married." She thrust her face close to the blonde woman's. "I'm going to have things," she said. Her little voice was shrill and vibrant. "No thirty-dollar clerk for me when I marry. I've been studying, educating myself to speak nice, and everything. I gave the boy friend the air six months ago. Do you think I'm going to throw myself away?"

Before such indignation the woman gasped speechless. Her large hazel eyes, around which moisture still clung, looked at

Nina with a hypnotized fascination which was almost fear. "What you just told me," said Nina grimly, "explains a lot of things. It's just what I needed." Her eyes narrowed as she looked at the woman. "I've got enough on Pete Koch to put him in State's prison." And absently, thoughtfully, her fingers tapped the corner of a white envelope which protruded at the bosom of her dress.

The blonde woman drew on her new kid gloves before she stumbled from the elevator. The big foyer seemed almost quiet. The woman glanced about her. In the cashier's cage, at the end of the long hotel desk, sat a very pretty girl. And, as the blonde woman looked, she saw that a tall man stooped attentively beside the cage. His back was toward the blonde woman. But she could see that he leaned forward eagerly, absorbed in his conversation with the pretty girl. The woman took an impulsive step toward him. "Oh, my God!" she whispered. The expression on her face might have been pity —as though these bland shoulders in the well-cut coat seemed suddenly pathetically vulnerable, unaware of dangers.

Then abruptly she turned and walked down the long corridor which led to the side entrance of the hotel. She kept clasping and unclasping her gloved hands as she walked. She was still laughing when she reached the street.

TWO RED-HAIRED WOMEN

BY DON MARQUIS

FROM *Saturday Evening Post.* Also included in a volume entitled *A Variety of People*, by Don Marquis, published by Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

DON MARQUIS

the creator of the Old Soak and Archy and Mehitabel, was New York's most famous columnist until he gave up his post on the New York Sun to write books and plays. His new book of short stories, "A Variety of People," appears this fall, to be followed in the spring by a full length novel.

MR. TIMOTHY O'MEARA was a few years past sixty. He was bald, his countenance bore the scars of his youthful hard work and of the business struggles of his middle age. He was a building contractor, and he lived in Brooklyn. But in spite of all this staid and sober circumstance, Mr. O'Meara was essentially romantic and would be so until dreams and visions ceased with him altogether.

He had never led the kind of life, in his own person, that he felt should have been his, but he was forever reaching out into the past and identifying himself imaginatively with heroic actions and colorful situations. From the world at large he concealed this strong propensity of his, but his two sons, Jack and Terence, who had gone into his business with him, could now and then goad him into narrations which delighted them. Like so many Americans of Irish descent, all the poetry in his nature was twined about his love for Ireland, and his sons had discovered that the surest way to get him talking was to pretend to depreciate Ireland. He thoroughly understood what they were at, but he could never resist the challenge; and his snorts of rage as he answered them, and the occasional touch of Irish brogue that stole into his speech as he grew more interested in his legendary lyrics, were all a part of the game not least loved by him and his sons.

"It has always been a strange thing to me," said Terence to his brother Jack, one evening after dinner as they all sat about with their pipes and coffee, "that the Irish should fall down the way they do in the matter of diplomacy. Great warriors they have had in plenty, and great generals, great singers and great orators, but never one great diplomatist."

And Terence winked at his brother Jack as their father's bald head suddenly flushed pink.

"Yes," said Jack, with an unfilial answering wink, "and, do you know, I've about come to the conclusion that William of Orange was the world's greatest diplomatist."

The senior O'Meara dropped his pipe, and for an instant

the young men thought that for once they might have gone too far. But after one dreadful glare their father turned his face away from them and addressed the empty air as if speaking of his sons to someone not present.

"Shame upon them," he said—"shame upon them both for their terrible ignorance! And sorrow to me that has such sons!"

He picked up his pipe, refilled it with cut plug, and then addressed his sons with dignity:

"The greatest diplomatist of all times, ancient or modern, was an Irishman," he said—"not even barring Machiavelli, who was by descent an Irishman himself, as the name shows —nor yet Talleyrand."

"Who was he, Dad?" asked Jack.

"Timothy O'Meara was his name, the same as me own, and my ancestor he was," said Mr. O'Meara. "But neither one of you two would he acknowledge as his descendants."

The old gentleman's "neither one" trembled on the verge of being "nayther wan," and from this his sons argued that they had got him started. They settled themselves to listen, and presently, sweeping his mental eye back and forth along the ages, Mr. O'Meara descried a most attractive period and swooped upon it.

This great diplomatist, Timothy O'Meara, I'm telling ye about—me own name he had, and me ancestor he was, and by the word of him that's been handed down from O'Meara to O'Meara for generations, he must have been pretty much the same figure of a man I was in me own youth—lived during one of the most ticklish times in the history of the world. 'Twas an epoch so known and noted for bein' dangerous to everybody alive that 'tis a surprise, lookin' back on it, that anny wan survived that epoch to tell about it. Merely to kape wan's head upon wan's shoulders in thim days called for a constant exercise of tact and diplomacy of the first wather.

The main trouble with the British Islands at that day and date was that there were two quanes rulin' at the same time, wan of them in England, and that was Elizabeth, and the other wan in Scotland, and that was Mary Quane of Scots. And added to all the other trouble of the world was the terrible fact that both of thim quanes was red-headed.

Red-headed Mary, she sat on her throne in Edinburgh and promulgated to the known world that if she had her rights she would be Quane of England too. And red-headed Elizabeth sat on her throne in London and told the entire universe that she was Quane of England, and if she had her rights she would be Quane of Scotland as well, and thim that disbelieved her had better keep away from the swing of her scepter, be damned to them, says she. For she was a terrible talker and swearer, and a woman with two fists. A well-educated woman she was herself, but you could tell it on her that education hadn't been long in her family, and altogether she was wan of the roughest ladies that ever wore a crown.

Whichever wan of them finally won out as undisputed Quane of England, it went without sayin' that she would claim Ireland too. Everywan always claimed it. None of them foreigners could ever get it into their heads that all Ireland ever asked for was to be let alone in peace and quietness, so that she could fight out her troubles for herself. Fire and sword and the bloody Sassenach was doing their terrible work in Ireland at the very moment I'm speakin' of.

In the old and ancient days a thousand years before the time I'm tellin' ye of, as ye would know yourself if ye were not both stuffed to the ears with ignorance and misinformation, Ireland was the world's greatest country, givin' her light and learnin' to all the nations that gathered at her feet.

Most countries has but enough royal blood in thim to have but wan king and wan quane at a time, but in Ireland it's always been different. There was the King of Ulster and the King of Connaught, the King of Leinster, and the King of Munster, and over thim all was the high King of Ireland. And there was a lot more families that would have been sittin' on thrones thimselves if they but had their rights. And all these kings of Ireland, being proud and unconquerable heroes, was naturally opposed to each other gettin' away with annything; and that's how the foreigners was always gettin' in.

This Timothy O'Meara I'm tellin' ye about—my ancestor he was—would have been high King of all Ireland himself if he had but had his rights. But you two are willfully ignorant and unworthy of the remarkable men from whom ye sprang, and I don't know why I'm taking the trouble to enlighten ye.

Time and again Timothy O'Meara rallied his countrymen

against the Sassenach, but always they came again, because there was so many of thim. And after years of warfare, during which he had become the most skillful swordsman the world has ever seen and the most sagacious and strategical general, he says to himself wan day, he says:

"Be damned to all this! It's gettin' us nowheres at all, at all! As soon as I have wan tin thousand of thim English well whipped and sit down to me bit of porridge and bacon, there's another tin thousand of thim landed. 'Tis time to try diplomacy."

And he sat down on the shore of Ireland, a figure of a man like Conachur MacNessa or Finn MacCool himself, and combed his red beard through his fingers, and looked over toward the shore of England and cogitated. And he took off his helmet and scratched the place on top of his head that was growin' just a trifle bald, as was the premature way with me own hair, and he thought and thought.

"If I could but meet a king of England and talk this matter over with him, face to face and man to man, aquel to aquel and king to king, we might strike a bargain," says he. "But with no lesser man below the rank of king will Timothy O'Meara bandy words. And I don't like talkin' it over with a quane. Women is the divil."

If he had wan weakness in the world it was a weakness for women. By his appearance as well as his mental qualities and the great fame of his eloquence and warlike deeds, he was always and forever enslavin' women, and scarcely knowin' that he'd done it. But after he had seen the plight they was in, and their sufferin's for love of him, his ginerous heart would always begin to pity the poor craytures, and he would be aisy and reassurin' with thim, and thin, if he wasn't careful, they'd wrap him around their little fingers. And I hope that I'll never find out that either wan of you has inherited that tendency.

"I don't like it—her being a quane instead of a king," says he. "But somebody's got to save Ireland. So here goes!"

And with that he took his sword between his teeth and plunged into the wather, strikin' out bold and strong for the English shore. I was always a great swimmer, and this Timothy O'Meara, me ancestor, was as much at home in the wather as Manannan MacLir himself.

"Tact," says he, rollin' in the seas and spoutin' wather like a porpoise—"tact is what will save Ireland. Tact and diplomacy!"

Hand over hand he clambered up the rocky coast of Cornwall—as ye've seen me, yourselves, go up the framework of a building—and then he batted the sea gulls away from his eyes and shook the salt wather from his beard, and borrowed the first horse he seen and galloped off. Early next mornin' he was in London, and a surprisin' city it was to him, what with the crowds and leanin' houses and high towers and royal troops and all thim bannered palaces; but he was The O'Meara of that time, better than anny of thim, and he would not show his surprise to the Sassenach. He paused but long enough to trim his beard and dress himself in the latest style, and well before noon he set off to the Quane's palace.

'Twas no trouble at all for him to identify that same. If the two of ye were not sunk deep in ignorance and illiteracy, which ye are, ye would know that Quane Elizabeth's palace in that day was the most splendid and stately edifice ever erected by anny monarch annywheres outside of ancient Ireland. Through all the outer magnificence strode Timothy O'Meara with his head up, and that in his eye that forbade a question by anny underling. Past the courts and guards and fountains runnin' wine, and all the enginery and paraphernalia of great and royal luxury he went, till he came to a flight of broad steps that led upward to a most magnificent hall.

And all over thim steps, and at the top of thim, in front of the big gilded doors that led into the hall of state, was a crowd of the most risplindent courtiers on guard—English they was, most of thim, but with a sprinklin' of Scotch and a few Spaniards and Frinch, and two or three Irish—bad cess to the traitors! Knights and baronets, earls and dukes and princes, ginerals and admirals, by the gay and splendid look of thim, with their jewels and velvets, that's what they was, no less.

"And who are ye," says wan swaggerin' sprig of nobility, with his hand on his sword hilt as Tim laid hold upon the big door, "that thinks he can crash the gate of the Quane's own hall, without lave or likin' from annywan?"

"I'm The O'Meara," says Tim, and he gave the young popinjay a backhand swipe that tumbled him down the stairs.

None of us O'Mearas has ever had great patience with empty impertinence, then or now.

Fifty swords were out in a second and they ringed him round.

"I'm here from Ireland," says Tim, "to see the Quane of England. If diplomacy was not me intintion I'd cut me way through youse. But if there's anny of ye wishful for a little sport, now's the time to spake up. Diplomatist though I be, I'm the man for ye!"

Siviral of thim proved to be wishful, and in less than ten minutes he decimated three of thim Englishmen with a Scottish claymore, and then he accommodated an aquel number of Scotchmen with an English broadsword, and thin he took in his fist wan of thim Spanish rapiers and gave a fencin' lesson to a Frenchman, and then he says:

"Gintlemen, what man is the master of the British Islands at any form of fencin' with anny kind of soord?"

"The O'Meara is!" says they all, with wan hearty voice.

"'Tis well ye English and Scotch know it," says Tim. "But is there anny Welshman here has his doubts?"

But if there was anny Welshman there he said nothing disputatious about it. And just then the lord chancellor flung open the big door to the Quane's hall, and he says:

"And what's all this racket of weapons out here? Have ye no more sinse than to be scrapin' steel almost in Her Majisty's very prisince?"

"'Tis I that am the responsible party," says Tim.

"And who might you be?" says the lord chancellor.

"I'm The O'Meara," says Tim.

"So!" says the lord chancellor. "The boldest rebel in Ireland! I've heard of ye!"

"I'm no rebel," says Tim, "but a free man. And were I not here on a diplomatic mission I'd bloody your mouth for ye." But as it was, he remembered his tact and did nothing but twist the old boy's whiskers a swipe or two.

"Stop your blattin', ye old goat," sings out Quane Elizabeth to the lord chancellor from her throne, "and bring The O'Meara to me, if 'tis he indeed that has his clutches on you. 'Tis long I have wanted to meet that impudent warrior!"

Timothy O'Meara—my ancestor he was—walked up the hall to where the Quane set on her throne, and he made her

the bow that anny gentleman of breedin' makes to a lady, but divil the bit did he kneel to her, and he stood and looked her in the eye, and she sat there and looked back at him.

"Ye're the bold rebel, Timothy O'Meara," says Quane Elizabeth.

"I've heard ye're no coward yerself, Your Majisty" says Tim.

"Do ye know anny reason why I should not have your head struck from your shoulders?" says the Quane.

"Siviral," says Tim.

"Such as?" says she.

"Faith," says he, looking pointedly at her own red hair, "if ye had the same love for red hair in a man that I have for red hair in a woman, ye'd never think of it," says he. "Besides which, 'twould be to the great detriment of me neck."

"That's what they all say," says the Quane.

And with that they smiled at each other, and all the guards and courtiers and dukes and counselors that was gathered about smiled also. A high-tempered and imperious woman was this Quane Elizabeth, and there was something free and commandin' in her that caught the fancy of me bold Timothy from the start. Not that she was anny great beauty; her nose was a trifle too long for that, but there was the divil's own intelligence in her eyes, and a humorsome way about her mouth, and a kind of dangerous element about her altogether that made her fascinatin' to Timothy O'Meara at wance, for he was wan of thim men that seeks out the prisince of peril for the pure enjoyment of facin' it. Thim intelligent women has always had a great fascination for meself; and there was manny a beautiful woman that loved Tim O'Meara that he cared less for than Quane Elizabeth, for all her long nose and bad manners and the way she painted her face. As for Tim, there was never yet the woman looked at the big lad without her imagination was stirred, nor was she ever quite the same woman afterward.

"And for what do ye come here so bold and proud, with your neck so stiff and your hand upon your sword?" says the Quane.

"I'm here as the discendant of the ancient kings of Ireland, rightful and historical," says Timothy O'Meara—"them

that had their high seats on the hill of Tara and was the masters of war and wisdom. I bear word to ye from the green island that's never been conquered yet, and the word I bring is that ye might as well quit tryin'! For a thousand years we've been assaulted and tricked and massacred by the bulcheens of the world—the Dane, the Norman, and the Sassenach—but we're still strong-hearted in the field and fightin' back. And in a thousand years from now, if there's wan heart still beatin' there, 'twill be a heart that's free and strong, aven though it beats alone against a million tyrants. Ye cannot conquer us, Quane, but ye can take away thim troops off a people that was never yours and never will be; ye can do that free and ginerous without conditions, and ye'll find a ginerosity springin' up to equal yours, and after while 'tis Ireland may forgive ye and be your friend."

"'Tis I that am the Quane of Ireland!" says Elizabeth.

'Twas on the tip of The O'Meara's tongue to rejoin with heat, but he remembered his diplomacy in the nick of time, and all he said was: "Some dirty, lyin' old fool of a prime minister has been stuffin' thim beautiful ears of yours with nonsinse and falsehoods, Your Majisty."

Quane Elizabeth sat and thought, and frowned at him and sized him up, the while she picked her teeth with the end of her scepter, for good manners was only an occasional practice with that quane. Then she sent everywan else from the room, and she says:

"Mr. O'Meara, in me heart I know ye're not far wrong. But 'tis wan of the obsessions of this people of mine that the ruler of England should be the ruler of Ireland too. 'Twould not be so aisy as ye seem to think—doing what ye ask. But if I was to take the risk and give up Ireland to ye, tell me this: What would ye give me in return?"

"Annything ye want," says Tim.

"Scotland's what I want," says she.

"'Tis yours in six weeks," says Timothy, "if ye'll give me but half the men we have blunderin' about Ireland, and I'll take a few hundred of me own Irishmen that has learned thim English the rudiments of fightin'."

"Annything else?" says the Quane.

"France, if ye'd like it," says Tim.

"Annything else?" says the Quane, speakin' but little

above a whisper this time, but with that tilt of the head that says:

Well, what about it?

Tim, he was wan of thim unfortunate men that's cursed with a knowledge of what ye can do and when ye can do it, and he stepped up to the throne and dropped his arm about her. But he only kissed her wance or twice, rememberin' his diplomacy just in time, and not wantin' to commit himself with irrevocability.

"Tim," says she, "can't ye forget Ireland and stay in London for a while? I need men like yoursilf. Ye should be commander of me armies and admiral of me navies and prime minister of all me councils, and if there's anything more than that ye might want, ye'd have but to put the name on it, Tim."

Tim thinks quick and diplomatic to himself, wonderin' whether it would be for the benefit of Ireland if he married her, or whether that would work out to the detriment of both Ireland and himself in the long run.

"Marriage," says he, tentative and judicial, and risking another kiss on her for the sake of Ireland, "is wan of thim yes-and-no games, Your Majisty."

"Who said annything about marriage?" says she, twisting loose and frowning on him. "Be damned to marriage! The Maiden Quane was I born and the Maiden Quane will I die. I'm a broad-minded woman, with very few prejudices, but the wan strong prejudice I have is against a Quane gettin' married. What I was thinkin' of was, maybe we might be engaged for a while."

"I hear Your Majisty's already been engaged a good deal to a lot of these noble gazabos," says Tim, "including King Philip of Spain and siviral dukes."

"Thim others is but statecraft, Timothy," says she. "There's little that's personal in thim. With you and me 'twould be far different."

"Well, now then, Your Majisty," says Tim, "ye put me in mind of a funeral I noticed this morning as I came past Westminster Abbey. They told me they was buryin' that part of the Duke of Norfolk from his collar down, and the part of him from his collar up is exposed to the wind and weather on Temple Bar; and between the two, where his neck ought to

be, there's three companies of royal halberdiers. Separations like that must be painful, followin' a long engagement like yours and his was."

"He wasn't executed because he was engaged to me, Timothy. He was executed because of high treason. He went and proposed matrimony to that Mary Stuart, who calls herself Quane of Scotland."

And when she mentioned Mary Stuart's name there came an expression on her face that made Tim more diplomatic than ever about getting himself engaged to her.

"And Scotland," he says, getting back to where they was, "is yours, Your Majisty, within two months after ye've evacuated Ireland."

She pushed him away from her, and she gave him a long look and she laughed.

"Ye trade too fast, Mr. O'Meara," she says. "The way of it will be this: Me troops will leave Ireland the day after I'm crowned Quane of Scotland at Edinburgh, with Mary Stuart's head in a basket at me feet."

And move her from that decision he could not, neither with the power of reason nor with the blandishments of his magnetic and affectionate personality. For three days, off and on, they debated that point, while she entertained him royal at her palace, but at the end of that time she was just as firm and fixed as at the beginning: Ireland she would not give up to him till first he'd conquered Scotland for her. And on the morning of the fourth day he leaped on his horse and galloped north to scout the ground over alone.

Through sun and moon and rain he galloped, day and night, commandeerin' cattle in the Quane's name as he needed them, up the middle of England and through them Cheviot Hills, keepin' his strategical eye peeled for military positions as he rode; and 'twas on an afternoon of blowin' wind and streaks of sunlight through the clouds he topped a ridge and looked across land and wather upon the tall town of Edinburgh, wavin' her plumes of smoke a dozen miles away.

And betwixt the sight of that and the reach of his mind there came the whistle of feathers and the scream of a bird, and right in the air forninst his station a falcon stooped with a whir of silver bells and struck all his blades into the red life of a heron. But no time had Timothy to think of thim rumpled

feathers, for with a shout and a rattle of hoofs, a lady all in green stormed up the rise before him on a white palfrey, and a man, ridin' after her, bent from his saddle and snatchin' at her bridle.

"Ruthven!" she cried, and lashed out at him with her riding whip. And with that both reined their horses to a prancing stand.

"I have my Lord Murray's orders never to let ye ride alone," says the man, sullen and black.

"That for my Lord Murray's orders!" cries the woman, and with the word she gave her horse the spur and was on him like the spring of a wildcat. Twice she cut him on the face, while the air danced with the forefeet of horses and the man swayed in his saddle; and if it had been a blade instead of a whip 'twould have been the fellow's finish that instant. Back staggered his horse, and he caught his dropped reins again in one hand and laid the other on his dagger.

"Ruthven!" she cried again, and raised her whip once more. But me bold Tim spurred between them.

"Will ye draw steel on a lady!" he roared, whirlin' out his sword with the word.

The man let go the dagger and out with his own sword. Timothy O'Meara—me ancestor he was—was too distinguished a swordsman to trifle with a foe just for the mere pleasure of it, and now the blood of the ancient chiefs of Ireland was singin' through him, and with one neat backhand sweep he sent that fellow's head rollin' down the hill and his horse galloped off with the rest of him.

"'Twas a good blow," says the lady.

"I misdoubt," says Tim, lookin' after the horse, "but that I was a trifle hasty with him. But 'tis not in me character to see a man offer insult to a lady."

"'Tis no great matter," says the lady; "there's plenty more where he comes from—sons and fathers and cousins."

"Who was he?" says Tim.

"Wan of them Ruthvens," says she. "They're always in trouble. And who are ye, me bold knight?"

"I'm The O'Meara," says Tim, "from Ireland."

"I've heard of ye," says she, "as who in the world has not? I'm Mary Stuart," she says.

"The Quane of Scotland?" he says.

"And France," says she. "And England, too, if I but had me rights."

"Be gosh," says Tim, rash and impulsive, and clean forgetful for the moment of all his diplomacy, "but I'll make ye Quane of England the day ye say the word. And yes," he says, says he, "and on top of that, the Quane of Ireland too."

For I had been lookin' hard at her, and her at me, and it had come over me with a rush——

Mr. O'Meara suddenly checked himself, his bald head flushing, and gave his attention to his pipe but no notice at all to his two sons, who were grinning broadly and ironically at him. He cleaned his pipe with elaborate care, lighted it again and resumed.

Timothy O'Meara had been looking hard at her, as she at him, and it had come over him with a rush that if Ireland was to have a quane, this woman was the quane for Ireland. Red was her hair, and it was blowin' in the wind—a brown red the most of it, but with streaks of gold red twisted through it—and hazel was her eyes, but there was glints of gold in them, too, and through that quane's white skin ye could mark at times the leap and circlin' of her blood. A golden woman she was, and there was the sparkle of red wine in her, too, and there's been no language known to any bard could tell her beauty nor the wild intoxication from it—nor no harper to sing it, neither, since the old and ancient days when we chanted of the only woman that was ever more beautiful than she, and that was Deirdre herself, the Troubler of Ireland and the world.

"No man," says he, "could look at ye, Quane Mary, and not want to give ye all the kingdoms of the earth."

"Wan kingdom at a time," says she, and laughed; and if he had not been already hers that laughter would have finished him. And as for her—I will keep back no secrets from ye—he had upon her the usual and instantaneous effect that he had upon all mortal women everywhere and always. "From what I've heard of ye," says she, "and what I've seen myself, I think ye could make me Quane of England in good earnest."

"There's but wan thing I ask of ye, Quane Mary," says Tim, all his diplomacy coming back to him again, "and 'tis

that when ye're Quane of England ye'll let Ireland go her own way, alone and free. And I think ye'd better sign a paper to that effect before I put ye on the throne."

"I'll sign it the day I'm crowned in London," says Mary, "and that's a good deal to give up to you, Mr. O'Meara, for the fact is that I'm Quane of Ireland by rights now, and I'll have the double right when I'm Quane of England."

"Now, now, now," says Tim, "don't talk to me like that, or I'll think there's more honey than wisdom on thim lips of yours. We can't deal on thim terms at all, at all," says he.

With that she give him a look out of her eye. "And isn't there anny other terms you and me could deal on, Timothy O'Meara?" says she. And with that look there went a smile.

Now Tim was wan of thim unfortunate men, as I've tried to show youse, who knew by instinct what wan of thim looks and wan of thim smiles called for—unfortunate, I say, because his impulses was forever gettin' into the way of his diplomacy. He slipped his arm around her and lifted her from her horse to his own.

"Moira," he says, "if anny woman in the world could make me forget me juty to Ireland, 'twould be yourself!" And with that he kissed her wance or twice. "But no woman could," says he. And with that he kissed her again. "Not aven you," says he. And what more was said and done in the next few minutes, he was always too much of a gentleman to tell annywan, and your father will lave it to your own imaginations.

"There's wan other thing I would dearly love to have, Timothy darlint," says she afther while, when she was back on her own horse again, "and that's me Cousin Elizabeth's head in a basket."

"We'll see about that, Moira," says Tim, aisy and tactful, not wishin' to commit himself to annything. And with that the rest of her huntin' party, which she had outridden and lost, came jinglin' up. 'Twas to Holyrood Castle they went, and there Quane Mary entertained him free and royal for three days. 'Twas on the second day the Quane proposed marriage to him.

"I hear Your Majisty is married already," says Tim, diplomatic.

"Didn't ye hear that terrible explosion last night?" says Mary, "That was me husband getting himself blown up with

gunpowder, out in the suburbs. He was always a clumsy fellow, that Darnley." And she stooped down and fixed wan of the rugs on the floor. "Mary Livingstone," she says to a lady in waitin', with a kind of mist in her eyes, "you girls have got no affection for your quane! I have always to be straightenin' out this rug for mesilf."

"Your Majisty knows we love you," says Mary Livingstone, with a curtsy, "but ye must remember we have not the same motive as yourself for rememberin' what that spot on the floor is. There's times when we forget just where it was Davy Rizzio was stabbed."

"Nobody loves me," says the Quane, lookin' at Tim, "neither man nor woman."

If the whole court hadn't been there, Tim would have showed her that minute she was wrong, as who wouldn't? But he kept hold of his diplomacy.

"Your Majisty," says he, being careful to call her that in public, "I've heard some talk that the Earl of Bothwell would be your next husband."

"Why, I thought that the Earl of Bothwell had met with a fatal accident!" says the Quane, looking surprised and speakin' to a group of them noblemen standin' about. "Lindsay," she says, "or Douglas, or some of you that's not too near related to him, won't you be so kind as to go and bring the Quane the very latest news about the Earl of Bothwell?" And six of them bullies started out of the room at once, lickin' their chops. "Remember, now," she calls after them; "bring back to me nothin' but the very latest news of what poor Bothwell's fate has been!"

And with that she turned a dazzlin' smile on Tim, as if to say obstacles to their matrimony seemed to be eliminating themselves.

"And now," says she, lookin' around on the rest of the gentlemen, "is there anny wan else present I've promised to marry?"

"Your Majisty mentioned it to me wan day," says the Lord of the Isles, feelin' unaisy of his neck, "but I got the idea Your Majisty was just havin' wan of your bursts of mirriment."

"What," says she; "is the man tellin' me he don't want to marry me? Speak up," she says; "do ye want to marry me or don't ye?"

"I'm willin' to let bygones be bygones, please Your Majisty, if you are," says the Lord of the Isles.

"Never in the world," says Mary, turning a bright and beautiful pink, "was such an insult offered to a quane before in broad daylight, and her sittin' on her throne. Don't," she says, covering her face with her hands—"don't anny of you gentlemen be too cruel with the man that uttered it, for 'tis plain he's not sane and accountable for his actions. And don't," she says, peeking through her fingers—"don't be too slow with him, neither!" And the wans that led him out wasn't.

"Timothy O'Meara," says she to him, "I'll have a word in private with ye," and gave him one of them looks and dismissed the court. Wan word in private between them two always led to another, and so on and on, in the way of love and logic. But at the end of two days' discourse betwixt thim of this and that, there was wan thing that Quane Mary was just as fixed and firm about as at the beginning: She would sign no paper givin' up Ireland to him till first he'd set her on the throne of England. And on the morning of the fourth day, wonderin' about manny things, Tim got on his horse and rode away.

And he hadn't rode many miles before it came to him like a flash that there was a good many diplomatic disadvantages in his situation along with the diplomatic advantages of it. "Suppose either wan of thim quanes should get the notion," says he to himself, "that I've been makin' love to the other wan, and each of thim after wanting the other's head that way?" An' he couldn't deny to himself that, although he'd been careful not to commit himself to nothing much, yet at the same time he'd given both of thim a bit of encouragement. "I'm betwixt love and honor," says Tim to himself, "and I've got to step aisy." But the main point of honor with him was which wan of thim would herself be doing the most honorable thing for Ireland. "They're both of thim kind o' foxy, too—thim quanes," says Tim to himself. 'Twas running through Tim's mind 'twould be the better stroke of diplomacy if he could but get the promise of both of thim regardin' Ireland before he handed another crown to either wan of thim.

If Ireland was out of the question he'd have married Mary in a minute, and be damned to Elizabeth, as annywan would.

But thinkin' how much him and Mary was in love with each other made him sorry for Elizabeth, too, and the more he thought of it the more he pitied her, and he says to himself he'll have to be extra kind to her when he sees her, to make up to her for what she don't know about, and 'tis just this kind of tinder-heartedness that kept me in trouble all through me youth.

And 'twas thus he was revolvin' love and diplomacy around in his head when he rode into London early one mornin' and sent word in to Queen Elizabeth to get out of bed and slip somethin' on; he wanted to speak with her at wance.

"And how is Scotland, Timothy?" says Quane Elizabeth, sittin' on the side of her bed with a cup of morning tay in her hand, flappin' a pair of blue mules on her feet.

"'Tis still there," says Tim, diplomatic and noncommittal.

"I suppose you didn't see that Mary Stuart, now, did ye?" asked the Quane.

"I did get a glimpse of her," says Tim, still tactful.

"Tell me, Timothy," says the Quane, very confidential; "what does the woman really look like?"

"There's but one woman in the known world, Elizabeth, who has any advantage on her in the way of looks," says Timothy, seein' that this was not wan of thim times when a diplomatist could afford to be entirely frank.

"And who may that woman be?" asks Elizabeth, cocking her intelligint eye at him over the top of the taycup.

"'Tis yourself," says Timothy O'Meara, telling the most outrageous and audacious lie that ever left the lips of mortal man. But he pardoned himself, for 'twas for the sake of Ireland.

"You're full of blarney," says she, giving him her hand to kiss; but she was not ill pleased, at that.

"They do be sayin' in Scotland," says Tim, throwin' out a feeler to see if any of her spies had been busy, "that she's in mournin' for a husband and planning to marry another wan."

"Be damned to the woman!" says Elizabeth suddenly, throwing her cup and saucer against the wall. "I don't like her! There's manny reasons why I don't like her, but one of the chief ones is she's always gettin' married! Marriage! Marriage! Marriage! What way is that for a quane to be conductin' herself? 'Tis not dignified! 'Tis a kind of a reflection

on all us Maiden Quanes. A quane ought to be far and away above all that matrimonial nonsense!"

For days he discoursed with Elizabeth and debated, but he could get no further with her than the wan word: "Make me Quane of Scotland first, and after that Ireland's free," and on top of that she was forever urging him to enter into wan of thim formal engagements she was so fond of. Back he rides to Edinburgh, and 'twas similar with Mary. "Make me Quane of England first," she says, "and I'll see that Ireland's no more bothered"; and on top of that she was continually suggestin' matrimony. And after half a dozen of thim trips, commutin' back and forth, Tim says to himself: "I'm spendin' me life on horseback, but I'm not gettin' annywheres!"

And then wan day the inspiration come to him that if he could get the two of them near together and let aich wan of them get the idea he was maybe getting a little interested in the other, the jealousy arisin' out of that would lead to both of them offerin' better terms for Ireland, for the sake of holdin' onto himself. So he says to Elizabeth that he's concocted a scheme that will give her Scotland without great warfare, but there's a conference between her and Mary necessary first. And he speaks similar to Mary.

And 'twas thus he arranged the most extraordinary meeting of royalties and nobilities for the purpose of negotiations the world has ever seen. Quane Elizabeth comes north with twinty thousand men, in pride and splendor, and pitches her tent in a valley in the Cheviot Hills, and Quane Mary comes south with twinty thousand men and camps on the other side of the valley, and Timothy, who was to be president of the conferences, seats himself on a mountain overlooking both of them.

And both them quanes brings all their courts and all their counselors and earls and dukes, and their ladies with them, and the tents and pavilions was all of silk and cloth of gold and there was feastin' and frolickin' and tournaments and dances and sports, and the blowin' of trumpets and the squeal of pipes, and cannon boomin' all day and all night long in royal salutes, and nobody but the two quanes and Timothy knew what 'twas all about, and only Timothy knew the rights of it, for 'twas long before anny of this nonsinse about open diplomacy began to be chattered about the world.

Tim, he wasn't in no hurry, and the feastin' and the parties went on and on for weeks before the negotiations started; and the word that there was something momentous doing in England spread all over Europe. And King Philip of Spain marches in wan day off his ships with ten thousand troops, and tells Elizabeth he's with her through thick and thin, and then takes the same word to Mary. And the next day there's a burst of French horns, and the Juke of Alençon arrives with ten thousand men and says his brother, the King of France, would like to be reprisented too. And the Emperor of Austria and the Czar of Russia and the King of Prussia was the next that come troopin' over the hills with their drums beatin' and their banners flyin'. And with every fresh arrival there'd be a shout from all that soldiery and the thunderin' clangor of ten thousand bung starters beatin' on casks as more wine was opened, and the smell of the barbecued oxen was wafted across the wathers as far as Norway and Sweden, and all thim Scandinavian kings and nobility sniffed it and came along too. And Tim O'Meara sat on the top of his mountain and looked down on the valleys round about him and rubbed his hands and he says, "By the saints," says he, "I believe I've started something!"

Ye talk about diplomacy! Never was there so much of it gathered together in wan spot, before nor since. And 'twas Timothy O'Meara was the man that had the key to it all. Everywan could see that he was in the confidence of both of thim quanes, though nobody but himself knew to what extent, and everybody courted him.

"Mr. O'Meara," says the Duke of Alençon to him wan day, "ye could do worse for yourself than be commander in chief of the armies of France, under command of an enterprisin' young king like mesilf. And if ye'd arrange a marriage betwixt the Maiden Queen and me, that's what I'd make ye."

"But 'tis your brother is King of France," says Timothy.

"He's not feelin' so well these days," says the duke, twistin' his mustache to hide a smile, "and the bettin' is three to wan he won't live out the year."

"Mr. O'Meara," says the King of Spain, "I've been engaged to Quane Elizabeth, off and on, for three years, but still she dodges the altar. The day you get her there for me Mexico is your own."

"I'll think it over, Philip me lad," says The O'Meara.

And 'twas much the same with all of them kings and princes. Some of them wanted wan quane, and some of them the other, some of them this and some of them that, and sooner or later every wan of thim came to Tim. And thim two quanes kept him busier and busier. As yet, they hadn't met each other, but their jealousies was runnin' higher day by day, and aven hour by hour.

And the diplomacy kept gettin' thicker and thicker and thicker, with more and more of them monarchs puttin' their plans and combinations up to him, until he was himself, in his wan person, the repository for all the statecraft of Europe. And what with all that buzzin' in his head, and breakfast with Elizabeth, and lunch with Mary, and a drink or two with Spain and Austria, and tay with Elizabeth, and a drink or two with Norway and Sweden, and dinner with Mary, and card parties and dances, and late suppers with both thim quanes, and constant and continual love-makin', and new plans for Ireland formin' every day, the thoughts in Timothy O'Meara's head was whirlin' faster and faster.

Faster and faster spun the diplomacy, round and round, inside of him and outside, but no matter how fast it spun he kept himself the master of it, and he said: "There's wan thing that must not be! This diplomacy must not sink annywheres to the level of vulgar intrigue."

And then things took a turn that began to make him a little uneasy. Each of them quanes got the notion at the same time she ought to be provin' to him how he had the first place in her affections.

"Timothy, darlint," Mary would say to him, "why did ye not drop in to tay yesterday? I had the Duke of Hamilton executed just to please yourself, thinking maybe you'd heard the false rumor that he was to be married to me. Ye're neglectin' me, Tim; ye don't love me like ye did!"

"Mavourneen," Tim would say, "it's me that am plannin' statecraft for ye day and night, and ye say that to me!"

"And when will these conferences begin?" says she. "And when am I going to be Quane of England?"

"Lave the diplomacy of it to me, darlint," says Tim.

And he'd be getting notes from Elizabeth that said: "Timothy dear, ye've been absent from me nearly twinty-four

hours, and 'tis well I know politics is not all ye're talkin' to Mary Stuart these days. I've planned a party for your especial benefit to-morrow evening, and ye must not fail me. The Earl of Essex will be beheaded—him that was wance engaged to me—and afther that there will be dancing."

Tuesday it would be Essex to the block, and Wednesday it would be her old favorite, the Earl of Leicester, and Thursday it would be Sir Walter Raleigh. And Quane Mary runnin' through the Scotch nobility in the same way, beginnin' to work out of the earls in the Lowlands up through them chiefs of the Highland clans.

For a while these executions was no great moment to Timothy in thimselves; he took them philosophical, saying to himself: "There's another Englishman gone, and that's that," or, "There's another Scotchman!" For the most of thim were no friends of Ireland. But as it went on and on he began to wonder if 'twasn't a bad habit thim two quanes was formin' for thimselves, and a habit that might lead to dangerous consequences for himself in the long run. The date set for that conference betwixt the two quanes, and their first meetin' with each other, was comin' nearer and nearer, and the nearer it came the less aisy was it for Timothy to know exactly what was the best thing to do with all thim diplomatic situations he'd made himself the master of.

'Twas on the day before the wan the conference was set for that Elizabeth said to him:

"Timothy, me love, I've got joyous news for ye."

They were sitting in her royal pavilion, and Tim was getting a bit unaisy, for 'twas in his mind that he was overdue on the other side of the valley at Mary's encampment.

"What's the news, Elizabeth, me life?" says Tim, kissin' her tenderly on the back of her neck and thinkin' of Mary all the time. And terrible sorry he felt for Elizabeth, too, and that was the occasion of his tenderness.

" 'Tis just this, Timothy," says she: "I've decided to break me lifelong rule against matrimony—for wance annyhow—and marry ye!"

And with that she slipped a diamond ring onto his finger. Tim, the poor divil, he didn't dare to show his face for a minute, so he grabbed hold of her and squeezed her, and hung his countenance over her shoulder.

And pretty soon she says: "Ye don't say annything, Timothy."

"I'm speechless," says Tim—"speechless with delight." And then he says: " 'Twill be just as well to keep it secret for a few days, darlint, till we get some of these diplomatic matters setted."

And he got away from there as quick as 'twas decently possible, for he wanted to think over all the implications and complications of this new matter. If he was to be King consort of England he could rule that country and assure Ireland a square deal, but his heart was sore in him at the thought of Mary Stuart and giving her up like that.

And he stepped into the long tent where the lads in their white jackets was busy, and put his foot on the brass rail, for 'twas there the royal boys hung out of an afternoon; and he called for a glass of usquebaugh with a drop of bitters in it.

"Ye look sad, Tim," says Philip of Spain, edgin' over toward him. "What's eatin' ye?"

"Ain't women the divil, Philip?" says Tim, diplomatic and noncommittal.

"More especially thim red-headed wans," says the Duke of Alençon, tactless and partially inebriated. And the Czar of Russia, who was wan of them Asiatic savages with knowledge of no European language, so that he had to do his drinkin' through an interpreter, came over and declared himself in. And in a minute there was a dozen of them clustered around Tim at the kings' end of the bar, and the mere dukes and earls down at the other end was edgin' up as near as etiquette would sanction, with their ears open.

And wan thing led to another, what with the latest anecdotes and everybody wantin' to buy, until inside of an hour there was less discretion among thim than ye would think possible in the case of such seasoned diplomats. And as for Tim himself, the poor lad, inside of him was wan big heartbreak at the thought of losin' Mary Stuart, and it kept getting worse and worse the more he tried to drown it; and yet, on top of everything there was swimmin' the thought that maybe 'twould be the best thing for Ireland did he become King of England and protect her.

"What's the jam ye're in, Timothy, me boy?" says Alen-

çon. "Ye know damned well that I'm with youse, money, troops, or annything else."

"I know ye are, Juke," says Tim, "but 'tis wan of thim cases where naythor money nor troops will suffice." And he sighed.

" 'Tis women," says the King of Norway. And the King of Prussia nodded sympathetic, and they all had another wan.

"None of us would mention no names," says the King of Spain.

"Of course not," says Tim. "Ye're all gintlemen, aven if ye are kings."

And pretty soon Philip of Spain led him aside and says: "Tim, give me the low-down. What's due to break, in the way of diplomacy? Don't let me be caught unawares, Timothy."

"Things looks bad, Phil," says Tim, speakin' out of his heartbreak rather than his diplomacy.

"If hell pops annywheres, slip me the word quick and I'll know what to do," says Philip. "I'll take no risks. I'll turn me guns onto the Frinch at wance. These peace conferences is always dangerous."

"I'll do that same," says Tim. And wan after another, every monarch present led him aside private and put substantially the same question to him and got the same answer. "If hell pops," says Alençon, "I'll cut loose on the right flank of the English at wance." And so on, each naming his favorite enemy; and then they all went back to drinking with one another, the same as these modern peace conferences, and Tim sighed and went to see Mary.

Her being a female and feminine woman, it was natural the first thing she would notice would be the diamond ring on Tim's finger.

"Oh, Timothy, darlin'," she cries out, slippin' it off before he had time to resist her, " 'tis the first thing ye ever gave me!" And with that she put her arms around him. "It's sweet, it is!" she says. " 'Tis my engagement ring."

"Mary, me love," says Timothy, " 'twas me own mother's wedding ring"—and he was about to say that for that reason he couldn't give it to anyone, not aven to her, but before he could get that far with it, Mary says, says she: "Oh, Timothy. that makes it all the sweeter."

So Tim thinks to himself that he will get it away from her

again pretty soon with some pretext or another. But talking about this, that, or the other thing, political and personal, it clean slipped away from his mind, and when he left there late that night it was still out of his mind. The trouble was there was so many political complications in Tim's mind at this time that he had very little room there for anything else, and with both of them girls he had most desperately tried to postpone this conference that was coming to-morrow until he should get the opportunity to meditate more profoundly on the situation. But nayther one of them was willing for any more postponement. Each one of them wanted that other crown as soon as possible, and each one of them wanted Tim united with her in the holy bonds of matrimony.

And the next afternoon Tim sat alone at the table in the conference tent before ayther one of thim arrived, with considerable apprehension on the inside of him. One of thim came in through one door and one of them came in through the other, and both of thim had their crowns on, and aich of thim had a tea-party smile on her face, but what was underneath that smile Timothy trembled to think of.

They bowed formal to each other, with that smile, and Elizabeth was the first to speak. "You're Mary Stuart," says she.

"And you're Elizabeth Tudor," says the other wan. "I've often heard Mr. O'Meara speak of ye."

"Girls," says Tim, "sit down. And we'll be getting on with our statecraft."

But, as ill luck would have it, the first thing that Elizabeth noticed was that ring.

"Statecraft be damned!" she cried out, pointing to it. "Mary Stuart, where did ye get that diamond ye're wearin'?"

"'Tis wan of the crown jewels of Scotland," says Mary.

"Ye lie!" says Elizabeth.

Mary drew herself up proud and regal. "Ye speak to me like the daughter of Anne Boleyn, that everywan knows was never married legal to your father, the King."

"Ye answer me like David Rizzio's mistress," says Elizabeth, "that everywan knows was wance married legal to me Cousin Darnley," And with that they stood and looked at aich other in such a way as ye could feel the silk walls of that

tent crackin' and snappin' with electricity, whilst they themselves turned every color of the rainbow.

"Now then, ladies——" Tim says.

But they both turned on him. "As for you, Tim O'Meara——" says Elizabeth, and choked with rage. "As for you——" says Mary. 'Twas in that instant that the red hair of Tim O'Meara began to show streaks of gray. And slowly they turned back toward each other.

And 'twas then that Timothy O'Meara caught the sudden inspiration which was wan of the greatest strokes of diplomacy the world has ever seen. With thim two red-headed queens still locked in that terrible look, each strugglin' for the word that would say her feelin's, Tim backed quietly out of that tent and in a minute was standing at the door of the barroom.

"Boys," he cried out to all them royalties and notabilities, "hell has popped!"

Startled, they dropped their glasses, and as they turned their faces toward him the thing he saw plainest and always remembered was twenty pairs of eyes sticking out like the eyes of snails.

"Hell's popped!" he says again, and was out of there and took his way to his mountain. And he was scarcely there before he heard the drums beatin' and the trumpets blowin', and in a minute more the rattle and crash of musketry, and then began the roar of cannon. And in all the valleys and slopes beneath him there was the flash of steel and rollin' billows of fire and the reek of smoke and the shoutin' of men and the thunder of hoofbeats. "The world's at war," says Tim—"all but Ireland!"

And for three days he set on his mountain, lookin' down upon that strife, while reënforcements swarmed in from all sides, from all over the world, thinkin' to himself with every charge and every volley that there went another hundred foreigners who would never trouble the freedom of Ireland. For 'twas the crown and glory of his great stroke of diplomacy that, while the rest of the earth was at war and too busy to think of Ireland, out of that turmoil he would snatch the freedom of his native land.

And on the fourth day he took his way back home with the news that Ireland was free. And whilst he was organizing a stable government there he died in camp. But before he died

he got a note from Elizabeth in which she said: "Timothy, I have conquered Scotland and am now quane of the same, and I would sind ye the red head of that Mary Stuart by this same messenger, if I did not know that ye are more interested in auburn hair like me own than in plain red. A great manny of me counselors are urging me now that Scotland and Mary Stuart are out of me way, to go after Ireland and Tim O'Meara, and go afther thim hard. But old frindships is not so easy forgot as all that, and if it was in your mind to come over to London and visit the Maiden Quane, I have no doubt that somethin' could be fixed up satisfactory to England, Ireland, yoursilf, and me. Think it over, Timothy, me dear!"

And Timothy wrote an answer in which he says: "My dear Elizabeth, Ireland and me will stay whare we are." And the shame and sorrow of it all was that with his death the fruits of all his diplomacy was dissipated because his successors was lunkheads, and the Sassenach came back again with fire and sword.

But there's nothin' can take away the fame of his merits, and if I ever hear either wan of you whisperin' again that Ireland never had a diplomatist, I'll take both av youse acrost me knees and larrup ye well, as I am still able to do, praise God!

SINNERS

BY KATHLEEN NORRIS

FROM *Cosmopolitan*

KATHLEEN NORRIS

is the California novelist who so frequently figures in the best-seller lists. Among her latest books are "Red Silence," "Storm House," "The Foolish Virgin," "Barberry Bush," and "Beauty and the Beast."

WE HAVE to keep it kind of warm in here because of their not getting any exercise—they get chilly," the matron explained.

"Don't they get out?"

"Not this weather. And they sort of lose interest——"

The matron glanced at the visitor, and the latter, a big quiet-eyed woman in a handsome, dowdy coat, looked back at her dubiously.

"They haven't got much ambition left when they get here!" the matron said, with a laugh.

The other frowned faintly, as if in vague pain. She followed in silence through the big, clean, impersonal halls that smelled of coffee, disinfectants, air heaters, and herded, overclothed humanity.

"I didn't get your name?"

"Huggett. Mrs. Joe Huggett."

"And you're some kin to Lucas Rippey?"

"Some——? Oh, no. Just a friend." Mrs. Huggett cleared her throat; her serious face had turned a little pale.

Some of the poor forlorn old men were reading shabby magazines in the winter heat of the assembly room; a radio was playing. Many of the occupants of the big apartment were merely staring idly into space—broken in mind, the visitor saw, as well as body.

Lucas Rippey was a thin blue-eyed old man, with white, thin hair. He rose alertly, looked surprisedly at his visitor. When the matron had led him to a little side parlor and left them alone, he told Mrs. Huggett smilingly that he could not remember the time he had had a caller before. His bright blue eyes twinkled at her delightedly.

"But I've only be'n here two years and ain't settled down yet!" he confessed. "I worked, up to then. I got 'flu in the year 'twas so prevalent; the' warned me pneumonia'd foller. And sure 'nough, it did!"

"Take a good look at me, Lucas," Mrs. Huggett said

heavily. She had seated herself, thrown back her widow's veil. "Don't you remember me?"

He looked at her keenly, still smiling. "No'm. I'm sorry. But your face don't say nothing to me."

"I was Emma Kent," she said slowly.

The old man sat down himself now, suddenly with an air of shock. The light had died out of his eyes.

"Is *that* who you are?" he said in a whisper.

There was a pause. Then the woman began, "I've been huntin' you for years."

"That so?" he asked, still in a dulled voice.

"Ever since I was thirteen years old," she continued, "ever since I was thirteen years old—and that's all of forty years ago—I've been sorry."

A softer look came into the blue eyes opposite her. Lucas Rippey began to shake his head regretfully, deprecatingly.

"I lied about you," the woman said flatly.

He cleared his throat and spoke without resentment. "I've often wondered why you did that," he admitted mildly.

"I don't know what got into me," the visitor said, in a stony, quiet voice. "I don't know what does get into a girl, sometimes."

She paused, and he looked at her with respectful sympathy. "I was runnin' with Sue Clute," she began again.

"Well, there!" he said, his face suddenly brightening, as he seized upon the diversion. "I hadn't thought of them Clutes for forty years!"

"Sue had her picture in the paper, and that was gall and wormwood to me," Emma Huggett pursued, resolutely. unhappily. "She was terrible pretty. I was just et up with jealousy, I guess."

He was considering it, his head on one side, lips pursed and eyes narrowed. "I never thought of that. I used to think you dremp' all you said," he murmured thoughtfully.

"No, I didn't dream it," the woman answered promptly. "I made it all up. I was dyin' to be important, to get noticed. by somebody, like Sue had. The day Kane Madison was murdered I begun romancin' to my mother and gran'mother, and the more they made of it, the smarter I thought I was. I don't know what in creation started me. But once I'd started, seems I couldn't stop."

"It's hard for us to explain our own acts, sometimes," Lucas said politely.

"Hard?" she echoed. "Well, I've been tryin' to explain mine for forty years!" A shadow fell upon her plain good face. "You were in prison?" she asked reluctantly.

"Sixteen years."

"Oh, my Lord," Emma said in a lifeless whisper. "State's prison?" she added.

"State's prison."

"Was it awful, Lucas?"

"Yes, at first it was," he admitted, his eyes fixed on space as he remembered. "I wa'n't much more than a kid, and some of them men wa'n't fit companions for man or beast. I was sickly, too; I'd be'n raised in the Bayliss County Orphans' Home, you know."

"I didn't know that!" she said, stricken. After a moment she added, "One minute, the last thing I was thinkin' of was you. The next, I was tellin' Ma and Gran'ma this long rigmarole about how I seen you up by the Madison place, runnin', and how you was buryin' something up near the birch grove in Holley's Woods."

"I never was anywheres near the Madison house that day," the old man offered, as she paused. His blue eyes were fixed upon her with a sort of innocent, dispassionate expectancy. It was almost as if she were entertaining him with a story.

"You told 'em that in court," she nodded. For the first time anguish came into her voice. "Oh, why, why, why," she began, knotting her big work-worn hands together, "why didn't they believe you, instead of takin' the word of a crazy girl of thirteen! Mind you," she went on suddenly, "after that first crazy Easter afternoon, when I'd told my mother this yarn, I lay awake all night, and I made up my mind that I'd come out with the truth the next day and tell them I'd been lyin'.

"But I couldn't get my courage up for it at breakfast, and at school, in recess, I kinder began to let it out to the other girls that I knew something about Kane Madison's murder. It was just too easy.

"Walkin' home from school, I remember, the wickedness of what I was doin' suddenly came over me, and I spoke right out loud, while I was goin' by Bassetts Pond. 'This has got to stop!' I says, as loud as that.

"But then when I got home Judge Robbins was there—the old judge himself, that us kids were all so scared of. And he held out his hand to me, gentle and friendly, and he says, 'Come here, Emma. You're only a little girl,' he says, 'and you don't understand the sinfulness of the world. Now,' he says, 'I want you should promise me that you'll not say any more about poor Kane Madison and the Rippey boy. Will you do that?' he says.

"Well, a great relief came over me, and I felt like I was saved. It never occurred to me that he was holdin' me as an important witness. I thought my share of the whole thing was over, and when the newspaper sent a feller out to get my picture the next day I was just as happy as I thought I'd be, gettin' my name into the paper. Judge Robbins had told me not to say nothing more about anything, and yet I was gettin' all the excitement of bein' pointed out and talked about."

"You never seen me near the Madison house the day Kane was killed," old Rippey said definitely, after a pause, "becuz I wa'n't there."

"No, I never saw you at all that day," she agreed dully, the hard shamed color in her face. "As a matter of fact, I was up in our attic all afternoon, dressin' up and playin' lady."

"Huh!" he commented, thinking.

The woman looked at him anxiously. "I used to pray," she began suddenly. "I used to go down on my knees and pray that somebody would come out and prove that I was lyin'. But I couldn't do it myself!"

"I guess they'd have convicted me, anyway," he suggested briefly.

"I don't know how they could."

"I was kind of a loafer," he remembered. "I was the kind of feller hard-workin' men like to git into jail."

Mrs. Huggett sat looking at him heavily, dumbly. She sighed.

"I started life a charge on the state," the man said. "I didn't git out of the orphanage until I was fourteen. At twenty-two, I was back on the state again, for sixteen years. When I come out I was quite delicate, and the' sent me to Colorado—well, I worked some, there. But the state was payin' my rent, just the same. And now—here I am, back on 'em for life this time, unless all signs fail!"

Her alert eyes had brightened with sudden resolute interest. "This time," she said, "I can get you out, if you want to get out."

"How do you mean?" he asked, puzzled.

"Well——" She looked about the clean, ugly, disinfectant-scented room; her shrug indicated the clean, ugly, disinfectant-scented institution behind it. "Do you *like* it here?" she asked simply.

His old face flushed painfully. "No, ma'am. Nobody could like it here," he answered firmly. "My pride—you may smile to hear me talk of pride——"

"I wasn't smilin'," Emma said, blinking and swallowing.

"The state's generosity I deeply appreciate," old Lucas Rippey said, with his favorite forlorn attempt at literary flourish. "But I've by no means made up my mind to remain. I ain't sixty-four yet."

Emma Huggett was silent for a thoughtful moment, considering. "I have a real nice ranch, down in the Santa Clara valley," she began suddenly. "My husband got it from his folks. I have fruit and chickens—barns—everything."

"I guess that's down Linden Creek way?" he hazarded.

"That's in California," Mrs. Huggett said briefly.

"Well, for pity's sakes!" he ejaculated. "That's always be'n a great word with me," he confessed. "California. It has a real pretty sound. I've always thought I'd like to see California."

"I hope you will," the woman said ineloquently.

"Ain't it some considerable distance away?" Lucas Rippey asked respectfully.

"It's well over twelve hundred miles by rail," she said.

"You be'n visitin' back here?" he pursued, puzzled.

"No; I come to find you."

This left him speechless. He smiled his polite, appreciative smile.

"For forty years I've been sayin' this to you," Emma Huggett presently began, in a determined voice. "I don't know as I ever imagined I would find you in a State Home, or that we'd both be so well along in years. But I knew that somewhere, sooner or later, I'd be sayin' it.

"You spent sixteen years in prison for a crime you didn't commit, and it was my fault," she summarized it. "I don't

know, Lucas, that anything in the world can make it up to you," she added, and there was a wistful softening in her heavy face as she looked at him.

"I guess I didn't 'mount to much, anyways," he said gallantly.

"That's neither here nor there; that don't lessen what I done," she persisted.

"Well, I always say I've had more time than most men for readin'," Lucas said cheerfully. "I'm a great hand for a book. Adventures—I seem to share 'em with the authors!"

"I'm well fixed," the woman said, not listening.

"And you live in California?"

"I was tellin' you. I've got a ranch—chickens and fruit—outside a place called Santa Clara."

He looked from the high institution window at barren fields level under January snows. "You don't have no snow there?"

"My alfalfa was three inches up this New Year's Day."

"For pity's sakes!"

"I had a big room fixed off the kitchen for my father," Mrs. Huggett presently observed. "He had sciatica, and he couldn't climb stairs. I have a radio down there, and a phonograph and an airtight. He was real comfortable there. I've got an old car you could drive.

"I'd do for you," she said humbly, thickly, her voice trembling, and her big bare hands beginning to tremble, too. "I'd do for you just as I done for Father. There's lots you'd like to do about the place. There's a Portuguese girl helps me with dishes and cleanin', but I'm one to run my own kitchen, and I'd like to have someone to cook for again."

"I don't know as I understand what you're drivin' at," Lucas said, clearing his throat.

"It isn't in any way makin' up to you," she persisted stubbornly.

"Why," he said kindly, pityingly, "what you done you done as a little girl. I wouldn't hold that against you! Nobody wouldn't. You seen a good chance to show off—children'll do that—that ain't nothing."

"I never thought, if I ever did find you, that you'd kill me, sayin' that," she observed, as he paused. "I'll get you your ticket, I'll make all arrangements, and I'll meet you at

San Jose station," she added. The tears had come into her eyes, with the difficult words; tears stood in his bright old blue eyes as he answered her.

"Why, I don't hardly suppose you're askin' me to leave the State Home, Emma?" he faltered.

She made an awkward gesture, laughed thickly, frowned again.

"Well! You take me completely by surprise," said Lucas. "Well! This is surely unexpected."

"It's the one thing in this world that I want to do."

"Gettin' out, huh?" he mused. And there were already wings in his voice. "I'd be glad to get out," he whispered, suddenly shaken. "This is a hard place to be—for a proud man." His voice thickened; he was still. "I wouldn't be no burden to you!" he assured her, recovering.

"I wouldn't care if you were."

"Well, I wouldn't be. I could do a good deal of cartin', in that car—I can drive any make there is," he said eagerly. "And there's nothing I don't know about chickens. Hosses—I haven't had so much dealin' with them. But chickens—there's money in them. And I ain't a sick man, you know. I've always be'n a worker, only it was winter comin' on, and myself well along in years, and they bein' apprehensive that I'd take another chest cold."

"You won't get any colds in Santa Clara."

"California!" he said, rapt. "Well, I declare, I didn't know, when I got up this mornin'—it shows how little trust we put in Providence. Seems we never know what's comin'!"

She sat heavily silent, watching him anxiously.

"I take this very kindly of you, Emma," he said, considering.

"It's like a dream to me that I've found you, Lucas, and you aren't dead, and I can maybe make up the hundredth part of what I done to you!"

"We ain't responsible for what we do as children."

"No, but we can pay for it, Lucas. I've been payin' for forty years."

"Sho!" he said, distressed.

"If they'd sent you to the chair, then I would have spoke!" she burst out miserably. "There wasn't ever any doubt in my mind about that! But there were extenuatin' circumstances,

and you was only tried for manslaughter. And, meanwhile, they were all makin' a fuss about me—reporters and court—everyone. I kept tryin', after I saw how terrible a lie I'd told—I kept tryin' to cut it down, and they'd praise me for that, too.

"My folks moved away, but I made a girl back home promise she'd let me know what happened to you. But she never wrote me. And after that I tried to put you out of my mind and to forget the whole thing.

"But I couldn't. It rode me day and night. It come between me and everything right and sweet about my marriage and my children. There wasn't one of 'em born that I didn't look down at his little face and say to myself, 'I wonder if some hysterical girl of thirteen is goin' to swear *your* good name and your future away!'

"You spent sixteen years in jail for a crime you didn't commit. But I've been forty years in torment, Lucas. I used to pray that the Lord would make it up to you and punish me. But I never had the courage to come out and confess. No livin' soul ever knew what you and I know. I was afraid."

"I don't know but what I've had the best of it, Emma. I haven't ever be'n much of a success," the man said. "But I don't know's I've ever be'n afraid, either. You mustn't feel too bad."

"I want you to come and live in comfort and independence on my place," she said. "If I'm ever to have another moment of peace, it'll be due to you. It's been burnin' in my soul for ten years that that was my way out."

"Well, you certainly are a good woman," he said slowly.

"I'm not a good woman at all. I'm the murderer, not you. I hardly knew you, and I did to you what a savage wouldn't do to his worst enemy. There's no happiness I could give you that'd clear me, I know that. But if putterin' about the farm and feelin' that you were a free man, with something put by in the bank, in case I was suddenly took—if that'd mean anything to you, Lucas, late as it is now to make amends, why, it'd be a charity to me to let me do it!"

He blinked with wet, smiling eyes. But he spoke sturdily. "If it'd mean anything! Why, Emma, I don't know as folks realize just what this kind of a place is like, eatin' amongst a lot of paupers and beggars and fellers that aren't mentally straight. If I ask for a shirt or a sweater or a pair of pants, she

unlocks the wardrobe and hands me out the first one she sees —I don't blame her, she's not got any reason to respec' me— but I haven't stopped respectin' myself, just the same. I don't know as you appreciate just how hard it is. A man likes a little peace and privacy," he explained simply.

"I'm alone now," the woman said. "My husband was a good man, but he was hard. He died awhile back; my boy died in the 'flu year. The little feller died when he wasn't but four, and my girl married a missionary and lives in China. But I'm well fixed. I'm not complainin'.

"Only, there hasn't been a day of my life I haven't thought of you. I don't know that there's been an hour when I haven't remembered that hot Easter Sunday, back home, when Kane Madison was murdered, and when I, a smug little girl with long curls, stood up and lied away your life!"

"You wasn't nothing but a kid, Emma."

"I knew better'n that, though."

"I certainly would enjoy livin' on a farm again," he said. "I'm country bred, and trees and fields seem to say something to me."

She was looking at him wistfully; there was something of humble entreaty, something of admiration, in her dull look. "There's just one thing more to say," she began abruptly. "I want you to understand that the obligation in this matter isn't on your side. It seems to me you've already done more for me, Lucas, than I'm ever goin' to be able to do for you!"

Six weeks later she walked down to the barn, on a hot March morning, to tell him that luncheon was ready. Supper was never anything but warmed-over biscuits and tea and fruit sauce and such nursery fare, but luncheon was a daily triumph for Emma, who was a master hand with chicken tapioca gravy and asparagus omelet.

The air was blue and singing, this morning, and all about the white farmhouse the lilacs were in flower. The yard was pleasantly littered with ropes and planks and odds and ends; a bridal wreath had burst like a pop-corn ball under the low window of Lucas's kitchen chamber, and up the slope of the hillside plum trees were white masses of bloom against a celestial sky.

The barn stood in a slight depression too shallow to be

called a cañon; mighty oaks were scattered among the shabby old buildings; the windmill was flanked by towering, tasseled eucalyptus trees. A calf was blatting somewhere out of sight; chickens were talking and picking near the line of white-washed farm buildings.

Lucas was sitting on a backless chair, mending something with a neat leather thong. The spring sunlight fell graciously upon his comfortable relaxed old figure in its muddy corduroys and thick sweater; he was whistling to himself as he worked, an Airedale attentive and adoring at his knee.

"If you aren't whitewashin' something, you're mendin' it!" Emma commented, with an air of dryness.

"That Portygee broke his milkin'-stool strap," Lucas explained.

"You're a great hand for jobs," she said, smiling.

His delight in the little farm had made her see it with new eyes. Joe Huggett had been a sufficiently satisfied rancher, but there had been no romance in his attitude. Lucas, a broken old jailbird from the poorhouse, saw enchantment everywhere. The placed seemed to gain an entity, a personal fascination, under his eager care.

Since Joe's death Emma had tossed her weekly copy of *Farm and Orchard* unopened upon a heap on the desk in the dining room. Lucas had fed upon these hungrily, had drawn her into discussions of pruning and henhouses.

He wanted to try a hive one of these days; he had theories about acacia honey. He was already "Uncle Luke," to the Portuguese who worked intermittently on the place; Carolina, the kitchenmaid, adored him.

He was happy, and Emma Huggett, watching him wistfully as he expanded in this new atmosphere of comfort and liberty, felt in her own sore heart a certain satisfaction that was somewhat like happiness, too. The old car was a Cinderella coach to him; he worked over it, tinkered with it, kept it shining. His own books and lamp, his coffee cup with the pink roses on it, the instant allegiance of the dog, these were things in which he took untiring delight.

"Lunch time?" he said, when she had inspected the milking stool.

"If you're goin' to be a real farmer, Lucas, you ought to call it dinner."

"Well, that's right, too." He walked along beside her through opened gates and corrals. "This feels more like June than March!" he said. And then suddenly, "Say, listen—listen. I've got a bone to pick with you. What's all this about?"

He drew from his pocket an envelope, a typewritten letter, a small brown book.

Her sad face brightened only a shade. "Oh, yes!" she said. "Yesterday was the first. I put some money—fifty dollars—to your account."

"I don't need money!" he protested. "I've got some of that check you sent the superintendent. I haven't no more use for money here than Captain has!"

The dog leaped at the kindly old hand that dropped to his shaggy head.

"I'd pay a foreman more'n that, Lucas."

"Why, but sho!" he said. "I eat my weight in butter and eggs every day."

"You don't eat much," she said quietly.

"It'll just accumulate there at the bank," he said stubbornly.

"It's a good place for it."

"I want to tell you something that may make you feel good, Emma," the man said suddenly. "I've kinder wanted to say it for some time, and I may's well say it now. I'd live the life I've lived all over again to have it come out like it has now."

"There isn't any money in the bank that could buy your sayin' that," she said simply.

"We don't know what governs our destinies," he went on. "What I'd have be'n without them long years of incarceration, who can say? I was destined to endure 'em, and you destined to eat your heart out with regret. But we don't know but what all's for the best." He stopped, innocently pleased with his own oratory.

She sighed deeply, frowned. "You've got a sweeter nature than I have, Lucas."

"It don't take a very sweet nature to appreciate havin' health and liberty and some work to do," he suggested.

"Remorse is the thing that ages you and eats into your night's rest," the woman observed, in her hopeless way. "You

might well forgive and forget because you're innocent. But I keep goin' over and over it. Ma and Gran'ma were in the kitchen when I got home that Easter afternoon, and I'll never forget Ma's holdin' out the paper to me. 'See about Susan Clute, and her folks sendin' her East for violin lessons?' she says. Sue'd always had everything I wanted.

"It kinder made me sick, the rest of that afternoon. I changed my dress and bathed my face and took a good long drink of water out at the pump, I remember, but I was just shakin', inside.

"About six o'clock Mrs. Tenney came runnin' over, and she told Ma about Kane Madison bein' murdered. 'I'd like to know where Lucas Rippey was this afternoon,' she says, in a scared sort of whisper, 'because everyone knows he and Kane were both after Thelma Cass."

"Then I spoke up. Right out of a clear sky I says, 'Why, I saw Lucas Rippey up near the Madison place this afternoon! I says. The minute I said it I knew I was done for. They both turned to me.

"'Then you know where poor Kane was found?' Mrs. Tenney says.

"'It must have been somewhere near the house,' I says at random, not knowin' whether she'd know I was lyin' then and there, and say that the body was down near the railroad tracks or something. But no, she just looked scareder than ever, and she says, 'Yes. He was layin' right across the doorsill.'

"After that I went on. As different neighbors came in, I'd tell it all afresh. And when Judge Robbins come, the next day, I was as easy as an old shoe with the details about how you spoke to me, and how you were buryin' something and asked me not to say I'd seen you. I was crazy, that's the only explanation."

They had halted in the shadow of the barn at the dooryard fence. The lilac blossoms near them moved in a soft breath of wind, and were still.

"I thought we was goin' to forget all this, Emma."

She laughed a brief troubled laugh, with a note of shame and gratitude in it. "Yes, that's the sensible thing to do."

"I don't know as it matters much what you do with your life long's you end it right," Lucas said thoughtfully.

"I know. But as if there wasn't trouble enough in the world, to send an innocent man to prison! Lucas," she added abruptly, in a quickened voice, "who did kill Kane Madison?"

"I don't know. We had a fight at the livery stable, all right, him and me," the old man said, "like it was proved in court. We fought over Thelma—she'd got into trouble, and he was sorter laughin' at me about it. I don't know when I've got so mad—all of a sudden.

"But that wa'n't all the score betwixt Kane Madison and me. Ever since I'd be'n a little feller in grade school he'd be'n bullyin' me. He used to twist my wrists. Sometimes my wrists would be sore for weeks, but I never dast to tell anybody. I hated him, all right; I *would* have killed him fast enough!

"This afternoon he come into Lenhart's stable while I was tendin' it for Lenhart, and he begun to ask me if I would like a message from Thelma. I wasn't never a regular beau of Thelma's but she seemed awful sweet and pretty to me, and I couldn't bear to think of her bein' in trouble.

"He backed me up to the loft ladder, and he begun forcin' me up, and I struck at him with the broom handle—like they brought out in court—and I yelled at him that I'd kill him, all right. The lady in the cottage next door told all that true enough, and that I run out after him.

"He run across the fields toward home. But I never followed him. I went up into the woods and laid down on the grass all afternoon, hatin' him."

"But then, who did kill him, Lucas?"

"Mysteries of the missin'!" he said cheerfully.

He admitted himself that he was "great" on mystery stories. But then, Emma would muse a little enviously, he was "great" on everything. She was well past her half-century mark, but she had never met anyone like Lucas before—unless an occasional vital enthusiastic child were like him.

Everything delighted him, every waking, every breakfast, every hour of his busy puttering day was a separate delight. He discussed the chickens as if they had been human entities; the old plow horses came over to the corral fence, and rested their great shaggy heads there, when Lucas was busy in the

farmyard; the Airedale crushed his hairy length against Lucas's porch door at night, and whined and muttered from time to time in a very ecstasy of love.

She regarded the sunshiny old face wistfully, painfully. "Nothing hasn't ever embittered you, Lucas."

"No," he agreed, considering. "Don't know's it has."

"But weren't you. thunderstruck when I, the minister's niece, come out with all that rigmarole?"

"Yes, I was, as I recall it. I was real surprised."

"It was my evidence that done it, Lucas."

"Emma, can't you forgive and forget?"

Emma laughed in desperation, seeing the sympathetic look upon his kindly rosy old face.

"I tell you there's many a millionaire of sixty-five that'd change places with me!" he assured her over and over again.

One hot July noon he and she were alone on the shabby, shadowy side porch. The sky was whitish-blue, the fig-tree shadows seemed to pulsate with a green light. In the orderly dooryard pepper plumes hung motionless, filling the air with pungent scent. Chickens were fluffing and complaining in the shadow of the stable lane; the windmill wheel was lifeless. Now and then the dog sighed and moaned faintly in his sleep.

Emma, always restlessly active, was stringing beans with quick expert movements of knife and fingers. Lucas was tinkering patiently with a flytrap, bending the wire gauze carefully, whistling under his breath.

He glanced at his companion now and then; stopped whistling. "Heat's given ye kinder a headache, has it, Emma?"

She raised heavy eyes. "No, I don't know as my head aches," she said slowly.

He worked on again in silence, and again gave her an uneasy look. "Emma," he said suddenly, "there's something I want to say to you."

She glanced up expectantly; his tone was odd. Her hands were still.

"I've had this on my mind for some time," Lucas began again. His old face had reddened painfully. He hesitated, looking at her doubtfully. "This may make kind of a difference——" he said, and stopped.

"What ever on earth are you talkin' about, Lucas?"

"You've be'n very kind to me," the old man resumed, forcing himself on. "And it's only right you should know."

"Know what?" she asked, nervous and impatient.

"Emma," he said, "would it surprise you to know that I done it?"

She looked at him blankly, heavily, not in the least understanding.

"I mean, that you are right about Kane Madison?" Lucas said.

The burning, difficult color of middle age spread to her own face. Her eyes not leaving his, she automatically put aside her panful of beans and raised her fingers to press her throat.

"Yessir, I done it," Lucas then stated flatly in an expressionless voice.

"Y-you," she stammered, and swallowed with a dry throat. "You—why, Lucas Rippey," she added sharply, "you don't know what you're sayin'!"

"Yes, I do, Emma," he persisted simply. For a long moment she watched him steadily, almost fearfully. "You wasn't anywheres near the Madison place!" she whispered at last.

"Becuz Kane Madison wa'n't killed at his own place. He was killed at Lenhart's barn, and he run all the way home."

Her eyes flashed as she considered this. "'Twa'n't possible," she breathed, still watching him as if fascinated.

"That's the way it was, though, Emma."

"Oh, my Lord!" she murmured, looking away. Her hand was clutching her heart now.

"I hit him with a pipe in Lenhart's," Lucas resumed. "He backed me up the ladder and he was ta'ntin' me about Thelma, I useter go kinder crazy whenever anyone ta'nted me like that. I useter go crazy even before I left the orphanage. The matron knew it. 'Don't get Lucas in a tantrum,' she useter say."

"Lucas, you never killed Kane Madison!"

"I say I did."

"You hit him on the head?"

"Down at Lenhart's, that Sunday afternoon. He run out the side door and went streakin' up through the medder. I run after him for a piece, yellin' at him that he couldn't talk to me that way, that I'd kill him. Then I come back, and I

was scared. I knelt down and prayed, right there in the middle of the stable, that he wouldn't die."

"But the mallet, Lucas? The mallet they found in the Madison kitchen, that had blood on it?"

"Well, maybe it was ackshally used to hammer a steak with, like old Gran'ma Madison said. Anyway, I knew I'd hurt him considerable. There was blood on the pipe, all right.

"I got up from my knees scared to death, and I says, out loud, 'I've got to get out of here! I've got to get away,' I says. And then it sort of come to me that no, better hang around and act innocent. So I went out and washed the gas pipe at the troft and threw it down in the sun on the dry grass."

"Your sleeves was wet when they took you!" she whispered, struck.

"Yes, from washin' the pipe. I washed my hands good, too, and then I prayed some more. My mother had be'n a great believer, and I says, 'I'll believe, too, if You get me out of this!' Well, I've come to believe!" he ended, with his sunny old smile. "But I had a long way to go before I found God."

"Lucas," the woman said, and her own voice was like a prayer, "do you tell me you killed Kane Madison?"

"Emma, if it meant goin' back to the town farm, I'd have to tell you."

"Oh, let that go!" sne exclaimed. "Just tell me—tell me that you done it!"

"I do tell you I done it!"

"You killed him, only he got home before he fell?"

"He run across the medder, Emma, holdin' onto his head."

"They never thought of that!" she said, remembering.

"They never thought of that."

"Then my lie," she began, ending a short silence—"my lie wasn't all a lie, Lucas?"

"No. I got— " he cleared his throat—"I got what was comin' to me!" he admitted.

"Oh, no," she muttered, shaking her head. "No, it wasn't right. It wasn't right to give a little feller of twenty-two a life term, no matter what he done! And you from the orphanage, too, and delicate—like we all knew you were.

"But oh, Lucas," she gasped, "I'm so grateful to you for havin' told me! I'm so grateful to you! I'm grateful to God!"

Her hands were over her face again. "My God, I thank Thee!" he heard her say. "I thank Thee."

When he looked at her after a time her arms were dangling limply at her sides and her cheeks were wet.

"Don't mind me, Lucas," she said, in an infinitely exhausted and gentle voice, with an unsteady smile. "Them's tears of joy. I'm happy. I don't know as I've been so happy since that Easter Day."

"It's be'n on my mind to tell you."

"And I thank you, Lucas. You never did a kinder thing in your life."

"I wanted you to know."

"Mind you," she said, with sudden vigor, "it don't lessen my wickedness in lyin' about you! No, it don't do away with that. But at least I didn't send an innocent boy to sixteen years in prison and ruin his life."

"You must of knew, Emma."

"No, I didn't, Lucas. I told them lies out of whole cloth!"

A long silence, hot and still all over the burning world that was beginning to smell of dusty apples and of Isabella grapes.

Emma was breathing like a spent runner. "The relief of it, Lucas!"

"It's goin' to make you feel different to me, Emma; that's what I'm kinder afraid of."

She had closed her eyes, her head flung back. Now she opened them. A smile suddenly brightened her face. She did not speak, but she extended a brown, hard hand, and his fingers caught hers.

"You don't feel—hard toward me, Emma?"

"Hard?" she echoed, with trembling lips. "Lucas," she said, "I'm never goin' to feel hard again toward nobody!"

"I'm a criminal," he reminded her simply.

"Yes, but you paid. While I——" she was beginning. "But no, I've paid, too," she amended it, under her breath. "We both done wrong, Lucas. But through the infinite goodness of God we've found each other and forgiven each other, and that's all there is to it. You've done more for me this afternoon than I could do for you if I made you the King of England!"

Blinking, swallowing, her hands still shaking, she began to gather up her pans.

"Well, there, I haven't felt like this in dear knows when!" she said, laughing and crying at once. "I'm goin' in to wash my face and hands and brush my hair and get my bearin's. It seems to me like a new world, and I shouldn't wonder if 'twas a pretty good one, like you're always tellin' me."

The screen door banged behind her lightly; he heard the clink of the pans in the kitchen, and then her heavy step mounting the inside stairs.

Lucas sat on, on the shady side porch, tinkering with his flytrap. He began to whistle softly again as he worked. Once he spoke to the drowsing dog, who immediately rose, whimpered affectionately, and pawed at the rough brown corduroy knee.

The old man smiled. He looked away, through a pattern of grape leaves, at the eternal hills, transparent and delicate to-day as opal-colored gauze.

There was peace, there was content, there might even have been a trace of wise and subtle humor in his eyes.

BUTTIN' BLOOD

BY PERNET PATTERSON

FROM *Atlantic Monthly*

PERNET PATTERSON

"Buttin' Blood" is PERNET PATTERSON'S first story. As he was himself nursed by a conjur' woman, Mr. Patterson has a knowledge equalled by few white men of Negro life and character in the older South. He was encouraged to write by Margaret Prescott Montague who introduced him to the ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

I

THE canvas-covered tobacco wagon had been jolting over the frozen track of Little North Road since before dawn. On the seat huddled two small figures, almost submerged in a welter of old quilts. Silent they sat, swaying instinctively to the pitch and roll of the wagon, as the steel tires climbed screechingly from rut to rut.

The larger, a white boy, held the reins loosely in one hand, allowing the mules their own way. His eyes were fixed abstractedly on the road ahead; his shoulders bowed, as if under weighty responsibilities.

The clink of the breast chains, in soft accompaniment to the *clack-clack* of the mules' shoes on the frozen ground, and the rumble and creak of the heavily loaded wagon came vaguely to him as homely, comforting sounds, in the deserted stillness of early morning. And the intimate mellow-peach fragrance of Virginia sun-cured tobacco, together with the everyday mule-and-harness smell, drifted over him comfortingly, too.

With a sigh he roused from his reverie and quickened the lagging team. Glancing at the small head resting on his shoulder, muffled in an old slouch hat brought down about the ears with a fragment of blanket, his face softened into a whimsical smile. He gave a vigorous shrug, and shouted:

"Wake up, Nubbin! Sun's up, nigger!"

The little form straightened with a start. An ashy-black hand came out from the chaos of covers and pulled off the headpiece. Slowly he rubbed his face, scratched his head, and rolled his big eyes at his companion.

"Huccome you 'niggah' me?" he demanded, frowning. "I got big graveyard in de woods full o' white boys what call me 'niggah.'"

The white boy threw back his head and laughed; then, turning suddenly, with an explosive "Baa!" butted his coonskin cap roundly against the black ear.

"Ba-a! Phut! Phut!" went the little darky, jumping from the seat; and bridling like an angry goat, sent his bullet head thump against the white boy's ribs.

"Ouch! I give up! I give up!" capitulated the latter.

"You ain' gwine call me 'niggah' no mo'?"

"No! No!" acceded the white boy, shrinking into his corner. "Cross my heart—and double cross," and his mittened hand made youth's inviolable sign of the double cross.

"Dat's mo' like hit—an' you member hit too, Luther Patten," grinned the Negro. With a final admonitory "Baa!" and a half-dancing shuffle of his big-shod feet on the wagon bottom, he dived to the seat and snatched the quilts about him.

"Huccome you don' git col' like me? Huccome don' no white folks git col' like niggah?" he asked querulously.

Luther smiled at the forbidden word; but of course it carried a vastly different meaning when used by Nubbin's race—an intangible, shadowy difference to the white mind, but to the black a difference as clear cut as a cameo.

He answered with an imitative question:

"Huccome nig—colored folks' heads harder than white folks'?" Wrinkling his brow, he pondered, "I rully do wonder what makes yo' head so tough. Don't it hurt you, Nub, buttin' ol' calves and things? Just buttin' a pile of bags hurts me somep'n awful. I don't reckon," he continued resignedly, "I ever will be a butter. But," he added, brightening, "I can drive tobacco to Richmond—that's more'n you can do."

"Hunh!" disparaged Nubbin. "Drivin' ol' 'bacca down ain' nothin', but buttin' is buttin'."

Pausing, he continued as if in soliloquy: "But I ain' no buttah a-tall. You des oughter seen my gran'pa. He war de buttin'es' one in de county—in de whole worl', I reckon. He kill hese'f buttin'——"

"Killed himself buttin'!"

"Yeah. A white man offer 'im two dollah ef he butt de sto' do'. Well, de wo'd wan't more'n outen he mouf 'fo' gran'pa had back hese'f back, an' wid a shake er he haid, 'way he went, buckin' an' jumpin', scerse touchin' de groun'; and when putty nigh de do' he give a 'Baa!' an' des nachully sailed th'u' de air, an'—blam! He hit it, an' went clear th'u' it, mon, up to he shoulders.

"Dey had a hard time gittin' 'im out, an' de man put de two dollah in he han', an' say he war de buttin'es' niggah in de county; but gran'pa des give one puny 'Baa' an' pass out, right dar. De hole stay in de do' fo' fifty—fo' hund'ed year; an' 't would be dar yit ef de sto' hadn't bu'ned. I reckon I got buttin' blood."

Luther sat musing, without comment.

After a silence Nubbin continued prophetically, "One dese days I gwina be de buttin'es' niggah in Louisa County—maybe in de whole worl'."

He added the last words softly, as if almost afraid to disclose such an overpowering vision. Sighing, he pulled the quilts to his chin, squirmed closer to Luther, and drifted into reverie. No word broke the silence as the wagon rocked on down Little North Road.

Suddenly Nubbin exclaimed, "Dar Jesus! Look who heah!'

Abreast of the wagon, just out of sight, trotted a diminutive black-and-white beagle. With his mouth lolling in a satisfied grin he jogged placidly along, seemingly intent on his own affairs.

"Git! Git home, you ol' sneaker, 'fore I tan you!" yelled Luther, hurrying to dismount.

But the short stubby legs of the hound had suddenly developed surprising speed. Before either boy could find a loose clod in the roadway, the dog was facing his enemies well out of range. Slowly he sank to his haunches, head cocked to one side questioningly. A barrage of frozen clods forced him to dive into the thick woods, where he vanished.

The victors meandered back toward the wagon. They skipped, galloped, and pushed each other into ruts. Nubbin, in his cracked man's shoes that seemed merely to dangle on his small splay feet, half shuffled, half waltzed, a big sack coat flopping grotesquely about his knees, the long sleeves completely hiding his hands.

Suddenly he became a buzzard. Holding his arms out rigidly the sleeve ends dangling like broken pinions, he sailed and circled, swooped and banked down the road. Another, less natural buzzard materialized behind the first, following its track, reproducing its every movement. The buzzards came up to the wagon with such a grandiose sweep that the drooping mules were startled from their dozing.

jolting along again, the boys chuckled and giggled. They certainly had scared 'at ol' Spot dog. Guess he was home by now. But wa'n't he some kind of a rabbit dog, though! And didn't he have sense? And he was a nice ol' dog. A hundred dollars—no, ten hundred dollars—wouldn't buy 'at ol' Spot. No sir-re-e!

II

As the morning wore on, Nubbin's imagination began to picture the contents of the big lunch basket under the seat. He wiped his lips frequently, but they would not stay dry. Feeling he had reached the limit of all human endurance, he leaned far over the dashboard and carefully scrutinized the sun.

"Unhu-n-h! Gittin' close tow'ds dinnah time," he asserted.

Luther cut a mischievous eye at him: "You're crazy! 'Tain' 'leven yet. Don' guess we'll eat till we get to Coleman's store."

Nubbin frowned: "*You* nevah could tell time by de sun —an' you know hit."

The argument was waxing vehement when a man on horseback drew up to inquire after Mr. Patten. Luther was much obliged to Mr. Thorpe: Yes, his father was a lot better, but a broken leg was a tedious thing. Yes, sir, they were taking the tobacco down. Yes, Luther knew the roads—he'd been down before with his father. Anyway, they hoped to pick up other wagons after they turned into the Big Road—at least to find them about sundown at the Deep Run Camping Ground.

"Well, you're a pretty spunky boy, taking the tobacco down with just that little nigger. Yo' pa ought to be proud of you," praised the man.

Luther flushed, but belittled the undertaking. Nubbin rolled his eyes at the white man.

Thorpe asked if Luther wasn't afraid he'd lose his dog in the big town.

"Dog?" asked the boy in surprise. "What dog?"

"Ain't that yo li'l hound under the wagon?"

With a flurry of quilts the boys were out on the ground. Slowly wagging his drooping tail, Spot lookéd up beseechingly from under his lids, and, rolling gently over on his back, held up his front paws, crooked at the joints like little hands.

"Now ain't dat de beatin'es'!" Nubbin exclaimed, mouth spreading in a wide grin. " 'Tain' no use whup 'im now," he interposed hastily, as Luther flourished the whip. "He too fur fo' drive 'im home."

"The nigger is right, Luther; you'll have to take him along," chuckled Thorpe.

"Oh, darn the ol' dog!" exclaimed Luther. He sprang to the seat and started the team so abruptly that the little Negro was caught with one leg over the dashboard. Scrambling in, glaring white eyed at his partner, he tucked the covers about himself in silence.

Finally Luther drew in the team beside a small brook and ordered Nubbin to unhitch and water while he built a fire. With the coffee pot steaming away and the heaping lunch basket before him, Luther's irritation melted. Nubbin, happy at his friend's softening mood, and utterly unable to watch quietly the arrangement of the mouth-watering biscuits, sausage, and apple puffs, shuffle-stepped in circles and, patting his hands, eyes half closed, sang softly in jig tempo:

"Sif' de meal an' gi' me de hus',
Bake de bread an' gi' me de crus',
Ho mart de Juba, Juba.
Juba dis an' Juba dat,
Eat de lean an' leave de fat,
Ho mart de Juba."

Spot was in the near background, keeping one eye on the basket, the other alert for any wild thing he might nose out of the brush piles. Suddenly a rabbit jumped from under his very feet! The basket was forgotten, the boys' yelling commands unheeded. Fainter and fainter grew the dog's yaps as the rabbit lured him on into the tangles of the deep woods.

With intermittent discussion of rabbit dogs in general—but particularly of ol' Spot and his qualities—biscuits, sausage, and puffs disappeared with alarming rapidity. Nubbin's jaws stopped working only after Luther had tied tight the basket cover.

The boys' prolonged calls and shrill whistles brought no Spot. Though thoroughly anxious, they could wait no longer. As it was, the sun would be low before they reached Deep Run Camp.

Both were silent as the wagon rolled down the long hill behind the trotting mules. Time must be made up on every down grade now.

At the foot of the hill a small black-and-white animal slipped out of the woods ahead of the team and, giving one self-assuring glance toward the wagon, trotted unconcernedly down the middle of the road toward Richmond.

"Look!" exclaimed Luther.

Nubbin chuckled. "Dat ol' dog!" he said admiringly. "Ain't he de beatin'es'?"

The other boy chuckled, too: "Ain't he some kinda smart ol' dog, though!"

The wagon lurched on and finally turned into the Big Road. Surely there should be other wagons now! But none were in sight. Perhaps they'd come up with one at the Forks. Gazing down the long deserted road, Luther's thoughts insistently turned to depressing possibilities. Suppose there were no wagons at the camp? His back crept. Deep Run was so ha'nty in late evening—with its black creek, winding like a monstrous snake into the blacker depths of the slash. And Nubbin wasn't much comfort—he was too scary. They must hurry on.

Evening approached, and still no wagons. Of all the tobacco that must be going down, why couldn't they pick up one single wagon? Both boys tried valiantly to keep the talk going, but after each fresh effort the periods of silence grew longer.

The sun was down before they became aware of it. The world went suddenly all dusky and fearsome. Luther was glad to feel Nubbin snuggling close to him again. He thought they should be close to Deep Run, but wasn't sure. He whipped up the jaded mules.

The way grew unfamiliar as dark settled over the road. The wagon seemed only to creep.

Nubbin shuddered: "'Tis gittin' so dark! Le's stop heah 'fo' we git in any mo' ol' black woods."

"Oh, we pretty near there now!" encouraged Luther. "'Twon' be no time 'fore we see a fire," but his voice trembled slightly.

He was tired—so tired with responsibility—and the mules were tired. Was it maybe three, or four miles yet to Deep Run

Hill? Persistently he beat away the thought that the camp ground might be vacant. The thing was to reach it!

Then, pulling up a grade that seemed interminable, the off mule fell to his knees.

"Oh, Jesus!" whimpered Nubbin. "Ol' Rock down! We can't go no fudder." He began to sob.

But Rock regained his feet and the wagon strained on again.

"You shut up, you ol' cry-baby!" admonished Luther scathingly. "I bet I won't bring any more ol' cry-babies with me!"

"Oh, I's so skeered! Hit all—so dark—an' skeery. . . . Oh, please! Le's stop an' buil' a fiah, Luther, please. . . ." The little black head went suddenly under the quilts and down on Luther's lap, the little arms grasped Luther's leg.

Suddenly the team quickened its pace, the wagon rolled more easily. The seat slanted forward, and the mules broke into a tired jog-trot.

"Man, we're here! We're on the big hill!" Luther shouted.

They tossed down the slope, Nubbin holding fast to Luther. Then Rock nickered, and a flickering light showed ahead.

Big Buck Smith, the boys' idea of a veritable paragon of a tobacco man, welcomed Luther, and the roaring fire welcomed Nubbin. Buck's frank, bluff praise embarrassed Luther almost to speechlessness:

"So you an' the little nigger jus' set out to carry the Ol' Man's 'bacca down, did you? Well, now, ain't that the beatin'es'!" and he slapped Luther so bearishly on the back that the boy swallowed his breath. "Well, you jus' foller ol' Buck; he'll p'int you down—a-rollin'," and he bellowed such a loud, assured guffaw that Luther felt the devil himself couldn't scare him now. Nubbin's white teeth glistened bravely across the fire.

Luther was treated almost as a man; and he swaggered a little as he spoke knowingly of the roads, the weather, and the color of this year's crop "up our way." Nubbin swaggered too—silently, in reflected glory, as he struttingly ordered Spot hither and yon, to the little hound's great discomfort. Buck even passed his plug of tobacco over to Luther.

"Don't believe I'll chew right now," he declined casually. "Maybe I'll take a bite later on."

Nubbin gave him so searching a stare that his eyes fell.

After the cheering supper about the big fire, his last bone sucked, Nubbin rubbed his face well over with the pork grease on his hands and rinsed them thoroughly in the residue. He cocked his old hat more assuredly and drew forth a small battered harmonica. Softly, tentatively, he sounded a chord or two. Buck looked up: Could the nigger play?

"Play!" bristled Luther. "Why, he can make a ol' harp fairly talk, man. Play 'im 'Nelly Gray,' Nub."

Lovingly the little darky's hands wrapped themselves about the harmonica; slowly his eyes closed; gently his big shoes began patting a subdued accompaniment. The strains of the old ballad rose softly, then swelled into the double-tonguing roll of the born master. Through "Minstick Town," "The Bob-tailed Nag," through ballad and reel, breakdown and jig, moaned and laughed the battered harmonica.

Without pause it swept into the finale, the time-honored air of the tobacco trains, the men humming the chorus:

"Car' my 'bacca down,
Car' my 'bacca down,
Car'y it down Richmon' town,
Car' my 'bacca down."

"Nigger, you sho' can play!" exclaimed Buck, as they rose to go to their wagons. "But a player like you oughter have a good harp—a big one. Maybe," and his eyes twinkled, "Santa Claus will bring you a new one." Then, turning to Luther, he laughingly added, "I'll bet that nigger is no 'count for nothin' else."

Luther seemed puzzled for a moment, then burst forth proudly: "He can butt."

The men roared with laughter. Buck gave him another of his bear slaps.

"That's all right," bridled the embarrassed boy, climbing into his wagon. "You jus' wait'll you see him butt sometime! He's *full* o' buttin' blood."

Cuddled together, wrapped and rewrapped in old quilts, the boys nested upon the soft tobacco in the space under the canvas top and soon droned themselves to sleep.

III

Luther's wagon was second in the little train that crawled slowly into the Big Road next morning as the sun began lightening the shadows of Deep Run Hollow.

First was Buck Smith's big four-mule team: rugged, powerful animals that could, hour by hour, eat up the miles with four thousand pounds of sun-cured behind them in the scow-shaped wagon of hickory and white oak. The canvas top, in natural accord with the rising bow and stern of the body, was more sway-backed, more rakish than the others. Big bundles of fodder bulged under the rope on the rumble behind; buckets swung underneath; a smutty fry pan and coffee pot and a bright ax and lantern rested in their slots and hooks. Red, brass-mounted cow-tail tassels swayed and sparkled from the headstalls of the big mules, who, even under heavy strain, tossed their heads proudly. A small bronze bell tinkled comfortingly from the hames of each leader—leaders who by mere word of command, even mere inflection of tone, would steer the ponderous wagon as easily and surely as a fur-gloved horseman could guide his pair of trotters.

"Some kind er ol' team!" murmured Nubbin, overpowered by admiration.

Awaking sharp echoes from the woods and hollows, the little train rumbled down the Big Road. Gradually other wagons joined the file: one dawdling at a country store; another waiting at a crossroad; another, warned by the tinkling bells, hurrying in a trot down a deep-cut side road. Wagons of all shapes and sizes, carrying the tobacco down! Wagons mud-red from tire to top, from the limit of the sun-cured belt; others yellow with the mud from Green Spring country; one blackened with the loam of Locust Creek—even a pariah of a produce wagon, with its butter and eggs. A giant serpent of wagons slowly winding its way down the road to Richmond.

And men! Black, and yellow, and white men! Old and young men, who yelled one to another above the rumble of the wagons. And a sprinkling of boys, a favored few, bound on a glorious sight-seeing orgy. Many would be the Munchausen tales carried back to their less fortunate brothers. Log schools, churchyards, and tobacco barns would be stirred to their amazed depths ere spring plowing began.

Luther's team held its place by dint of both boys walking. Sometimes, on the long steep hills, they became fearful as the gap widened between them and the big team; but Buck would wait at the top to blow his heavy mules.

Hours of plodding; then dinner by Great Stony Creek! Coffee pots clattered and axes rung. A line of little fires soon puffed their smoke aloft, like signals. Luther and Nubbin toasted biscuits and sausage; absorbed tobacco talk; made friends with new boys who came up in diffident admiration to see these young paladins who could take the 'bacca down. The boys were sorry when Buck called, "Hook up, men, I'm a-goin'!"

By midafternoon the men were fagged from miles of walking to ease their jaded teams. Luther would long ago have ridden but for his pride; Nubbin would have brazenly mounted, pride or no pride, but for Luther.

At one of his halts on a hilltop Buck called Luther. Nubbin followed closely as his partner joined the big man in front of the team. Pointing to a smoky haze in the east, Buck grinned delightedly: "Thar she is, boys! Richmond! We'll be in 'fore sundown."

The road grew smoother—Nubbin marveled at its smoothness. He marveled, too, at the sudden change in the men. Their plodding steps had become youthful; their seats in the saddle or on the wagon more jaunty; their voices brighter. Even the teams were infected with the change. Their step quickened. Occasionally they broke into a trot.

Soon the men mounted. Nubbin was relieved beyond words as he limped to the wagon. Luther resented his not entering into the spirit of their approach to Richmond, but perhaps he was just tired out.

Presently Nubbin asked, "Ain't hit tur'ble skeery, wid all dat ol' smoke an' all dem ol' big houses, an' folks, an' things? What do hit look like—'zactly?"

Luther couldn't explain exactly what it was like; but it was powerful big, and everybody was hustling, and big policemen in funny hats watched you. Nubbin shuddered and, inching nearer the white boy, relapsed into silence.

At last the city! The first outlying saloon!—planted there to catch the wagon trade. Most of the train pulled to the side and stopped—a dram at Reiley's was almost a ritual. The

wagons strung out like a fleet of rusty ships at anchor. The few people on the cinder sidewalks stared with interest. Tobacco was sure coming down!

"Is dis de great Richmon'?" inquired Nubbin, with a vague mixture of relief and disappointment.

Luther sniffed. Pshaw! The unpaved streets and sparse buildings of this outlying section were nothing! Just let Nubbin wait! The sights downtown would pop his eyes out. Why, they scared even Luther—at first.

Nubbin wished they were safely in Captain John's high-walled yard, of which he had heard so much—a yard full of wagons and men, but country wagons and country men.

The laughing drivers yelled or slapped one another goodbye, for here the train split into sections—some for Captain John Hundson's, some for Shockoe, some for Shelburn's—for any one of a half-dozen sales warehouses.

On the way downtown Nubbin made not a single comment at the sights Luther pointed out, nor a single reply to his banter. He kept his head over the side of the wagon, occasionally catching his breath audibly. As they turned into Governor Street the electric lights went on. Nubbin flinched and looked at Luther questioningly. Why, the light was almost as bright as the sun—you couldn't look straight at it!

The wagons rolled in a clatter down the ancient cobbled hill of Governor Street, back of the Governor's Mansion, the men lolling jauntily in their saddles or sitting in the wagons with knees acock, hats turned back. The mules were almost in a gallop.

Buck Smith gave a loud whoop, and in his deep voice imitated a fox horn's *Toot-te-toot-to-to-o-ot!* A door slammed in a house on the corner, a window went up; women were on the porch, at the windows, waving. Luther heard a shrill voice cry, "O you 'bacca boys! T'-night!" He wondered why Buck acted so foolishly, made so much noise; why the women came out in the cold, half dressed.

With utter nonchalance Buck swung the four big mules and the heavy wagon downhill, around corners, through narrow streets, as calmly and with as little effort as a woman takes a stitch. Lounging in the saddle, he ordered his chariot by easy word or slight check of the leader line.

Luther was frightened. His arms were cramped, his teeth

set. Nubbin huddled in the foot of the wagon, openly sobbing and praying. Spot, jolted off the seat, yelped in abject terror.

At last, with a swoop and a swing, Buck's long wagon rolled accurately through the big gate of Captain John Hundson's wagon yard. Luther, breathing relief, guided his team through after Buck.

Darkness came quickly down upon the night camp in the wagon yard. Red fires grew; vague forms, like misty giants, loomed and vanished again. Nubbin felt an eerie strangeness in it all. Even Luther was glad to join Buck Smith by his fire. But the cheerful champ of teams and laughter of men, the flash of bright tin cups and the aroma of boiling coffee and sizzling spareribs, soon lifted them and thrilled them with the all-pervasive, buoyant spirit of the occasion. Wasn't tomorrow the long-thought-of day of sight-seeing, of swaggering about the lower town with a pocketful of money, and of reunion, with toddies and gossip? Wasn't the 'bacca down?

After supper, with the pipe smoke rising in the frosty night air, the *plunk-plunk* of a banjo came from the far side of the yard, where the Negro drivers had instinctively herded together. Buck Smith yelled over that there were three fingers of rye to swap for a song.

The banjo awoke, and quickened to a run of chords. Then a smooth black baritone began:

"Road it mighty muddy,
Way it mighty long,
But a-soon I'll git my toddy,
Fo' de mule he mighty strong.

"Wo'kin' all de summah,
Like niggah in de fiel',
Jes' to git some money
Fo' city folks to steal.

"Car' my 'ba-ac-ca down,
Car' my 'ba-ac-ca down,
Car'y it down Richmon' town,
Car' my 'bacca down."

IV

Next morning, after their tobacco had been unloaded, the boys strolled through the warehouse. With shoulders bent and hands clasped behind them, with jaws working, they

passed up and down the long aisles between the piled flat baskets; two of a long line of men, walking and acting one like another; pulling out bundles to bury their noses deep in the peachy smell; spreading open the mahogany and chocolate leaves to note their color and feel; pinching off a piece here and there to roll it on their tongues.

The Negro boy aped Luther's every action—even to pretending to taste samples. Both frequently spat brown licorice juice, like amber. Spot walked bow-leggedly behind, sniffing at the baskets and sneezing often.

Wandering into a storage wing, they were accosted by a thick-chested black hogshead roller, his pig eyes taking in the small hound. "White boy," he said threateningly, "ef you wants dat pocket-size dog evah see home ag'in, you bettah lock him in de Cap'n's safe."

Spot growled.

"Oh, you's a fighter, is you? You wait, I gi'e you somep'n t' fight."

Laughing nastily, tne big Negro slouched away.

"What de mattah wid him?" questioned Nubbin apprehensively.

"I don' know," replied Luther, his face flushed, "but he better not be tryin' to bully men around here. I'll—I'll—I bet he'd be sorry if Cap'n John heard 'bout it."

Just then there was a flurry at the end of the warehouse—Captain John had come!

Captain John, red of face, debonair, military, the idol of his customers, and their best friend!

His arm about Luther's proud shoulder, one of his new dimes in Nubbin's pocket, he ambled beamingly down the aisles, shaking friendly hands, slapping friendly backs.

Luther's tobacco would be sold first! Yes, sir! The son of the Captain's old friend should get his check first and be free to enjoy the day. And the Captain wanted the buyers to bid the limit on this boy's tobacco; he'd brought it down, alone, with only a little nigger—and there was no better tobacco grown in Virginia.

Captain John had a way with him, and when Luther's tobacco had been sold the boys were jubilant. The top price for sun-cured, the auctioneer had said! Wouldn't the home folks be tickled!

Did any fellers ever have such a trip—such a time! Chattering, whistling, they skipped arm in arm across the cobbled yard to feed the mules.

Luther must go over his mother's list before the exploration of Main Street began. They perched themselves in the sun on the edge of a platform projecting from the far door in the wing of the warehouse, while Luther sedulously checked the items with a smudgy pencil stub. Nubbin was swinging his heels impatiently against the timbers. Spot was sniffing about in front, looking for stray bones.

Softly, very softly, unheard by the boys, the door behind them slid back. The small-eyed, ugly black face of the hogshead roller leered out for a moment, then furtively drew back. A peculiar sound, like animal claws, on a wood floor came from within. Spot suddenly froze, head cocked aside, one forefoot raised. Nubbin half whirled about and looked over his shoulder.

A huge brindle dog filled the open doorway. Slowly his powerful head swung, his vicious red eyes shifted from the boys to the poised figure of the little hound just beyond. A bullying growl issued from his throat.

With a terrified yell Nubbin rolled desperately over backward to the far corner of the platform. Spot squealed and darted for Luther's feet! The brindle snarled and charged!

Luther felt the heavy weight of the grotesque body as it struck him a slanting blow. Bowled over, he lay a moment confused and terrified. But the distressed muffled yelps of the little hound electrified him.

"Get a stick! Hit 'im, Nub—kill 'im!" he screamed. Running and dodging fruitlessly about the entangled dogs, he looked for a board, a stone, any weapon with which to drive off the bully, while he yelled boyish oaths and sobbed with fear and rage. He pawed at a protruding cobblestone which would not come free. Then a choking gurgle from Spot sent a shiver of fury through him.

Frenzied, he leaped at the brindle and swung his heavy-soled brogan into the dog's ribs. Once, twice, he kicked with all the power of his reckless fury, sobbing, mouthing: "Le' 'im go! Le' 'im go! You ol' heller! I'll kill you! I'll kick yo' ol' heart. . . ."

The mongrel whirled from the little dog with a sharl and

struck at Luther's leg. Before the boy could move, quick as a snake, the brute recovered and sprang for his throat.

Instinctively Luther stiffened and threw up a guarding arm, but he was staggered by the heavy dog's impact. Stumbling, borne backward, trying in vain to keep his feet, he screamed in terror as the beast's hot breath came in his face and he felt himself going down under those terrible fangs.

The little darky had been dancing up and down as if stung with hornets, his clenched fists beating the air. His lips stretched from his teeth in a tear-streaked grimace of horror, his shrill voice screamed:

"He'p! He'p! Run heah, somebody! Run heah! . . ."

When he saw the brindle bring down his partner he made a spring as if starting to his assistance. But the prospect of facing those savage fangs was too much for him. Holding up his ragged arms in supplication, he shrieked: "O Gawd! O Jesus! Have mercy! He killin' 'im. . . ."

A cry from Luther of "Help, Nub, hel-l-p!" reached a new spring in his consciousness. Fear, dreadful fear, had bound him; but the appeal in extremity from his friend, his own Luther, snapped the leash. The blood of the Congo, the spirit of lion-hunting forbears—and a butting grandsire—seethed within his little body, quickened within his soul. He went berserk.

With a sobbing snarl he threw his hat viciously to the floor, and sprang jumping, bouncing down the platform. Bleating an instinctive sharp "Baa!" his slim body left the edge of the platform, and, like a tattered arrow, shot through the ten feet of space—straight for the brindle's head. Against that head struck the crown of a Negro of buttin' blood—small, but of famous lineage; the grandson, indeed, of the buttin'es' niggah in de county.

V

When Nubbin came up out of the blackness of long oblivion, he thought he must be in heaven. Before his tired eyelids could lift, he seemed to hear a voice in the far distance say: "He's th'—buttin'es'—nigger—in—th'—world."

It must be heaven! On opening his eyes he was sure of it: a long-white-whiskered, white-haired old gentleman was pressing his head.

"Gabr'el!" he thought. "Rammin' home de golden crown!" But the crowning hurt terribly.

"Hit's too tight! Too tight!" he moaned, closing his eyes.

"Lie still, son! I'll soon be through."

He felt a sharp prick in his arm. Gabriel was trying to hurt him.

Dimly, amid much talk, he heard a tearful young voice, a voice that sounded like that of his beloved earthly partner. Luther was in heaven with him? That was good!

"Doctor, is he dyin'?"

"Dying nothing! When the hypodermic takes effect I'll finish stitching his head and strap up that shoulder. . . ."

What funny talk for angels! But of course heaven *was* a funny place. Anyway, he could take a nap—Luther was there.

Later, when his eyes opened to full consciousness, they glanced about the walls. Big railroad calendars, a long black stovepipe, and an old buggy harness did not seem appropriate decorations for the walls of heaven. Trying to turn over, he cried out.

"Does it hurt so bad, Nub?" asked an entirely earthly voice.

"Who dat?" he questioned feebly.

"It's me—Luther."

The white boy leaned solicitously over the figure mummied in shoulder and head bandages. "You feelin' better?" he asked, stroking the black paw.

"You talks natchul," Nubbin remarked doubtingly.

"Why shouldn't I? That ol' dog jus' chewed my overcoat collar. He hardly scratched my throat. But if it hadn't been for you," his voice broke, "I reckon—I'd been—mos' killed."

Nubbin's eyes were drawn back to the old harness.

"Den dis heah ain' . . . " he began, but his question was interrupted by a hot, black nose against his cheek. With an effort he looked into the face of what resembled a blear-eyed, disreputable old man with a soiled stock about his neck.

Smiling faintly, he asked, "He hu't much?"

No, Spot wasn't dangerously hurt, but there was a bad gash in his neck, which Luther had bandaged.

Captain John, Buck Smith, and a dozen others came admiringly into the room.

Buck Smith stood beside the boy's cot and, leaning over,

closed the slender black fingers about a narrow red-and-gold box from whose elaborate decorations stood out the words: "Full-Concert Harmonica."

Turning from the pinched face to the crowd, he said:

"Men, thar lays the buttin'es' little nigger in the world."

Slowly Nubbin seemed to awaken to the reality of his own familiar world, to the actual significance of those precious words. His eyes opened wide; they rolled from Buck Smith to the nodding men, then back to Buck.

He moistened his lips; his hand squeezed tight on the new harp. Then, slowly, like sunrise, a beatific smile lighted his ashy face. He sighed, as if unloading a great burden, and, closing his eyes, murmured:

"Yas, suh, I got buttin' blood."

A COFFIN FOR ANNA

BY ELISE M. RUSHFELDT

FROM *Frontier*

ELISE M. RUSHFELDT

the child of Norse pioneers on the Minnesota frontier, was born in a prairie town and has lived her life there but for intervals of foreign travel. Two years ago she relinquished teaching for free lance journalistic work and has since published several short stories that have attracted attention.

THIRTY days lost in jail because of women's vanity. Because Anna whined that she wanted a hat. He'd see to her. Didn't the Bible say that a man should be master of his own household? Just wait until he got home.

It had happened this way.

"Yes, we need money," she had agreed tonelessly the morning he had hitched up to drive away for harvest wages.

Her once pretty face was drawn. Her skirt sagged in back. She twisted her dirty blue check apron nervously in thin long hands, red and damp from dishwater, the blue veins standing out like cords with knots.

She had been one of the Servaas girls on the big farm on the crossroads before she married him. The Servaas girls were spoiled; always getting things.

Dully she had added, "But 'twill be hard to be left alone with the work. My back aches, and I ain't feeling so well. I don't know as I can care for the stock so very long. The baby might come."

The early breakfast was finished by the light of the kerosene lamp. The heavy white dishes stood in a group on one side of the brown-checked oilcloth-covered table, a group about his plate. She had not eaten. She had been frying cakes for him. She was standing now by the old kitchen stove doing things to pots and kettles. He pushed back his chair and took his overcoat from a nail by the kitchen door. Meanwhile he assuaged her worry with an easy carelessness.

"Won't come for a long time yet. You'll be durn lazy with only the stock to look after. It'll be bringing me in real money soon—that stock. Wouldn't take five hundred for it as it stands. And the calves will be worth more later on." He stopped, and his large thoughts began to build air castles about that stock. "Phoo! Sure you can care for the stock."

He eyed her slyly. What did she mean to do with her time when he was gone? "And hev' all the rest of your time for visiting around, I s'pose?" If there was one thing he couldn't

stand, it was this women's gadding. He had told her so, too.

"I ain't been visitin' for months and you know it. Not even to Mother's, since you quarreled with my only kin." The thin fingers had twisted the apron into a tighter knot. She leaned back against the door frame watching him as he checked and untied the horses that he had hitched, waiting, by the unpainted gray board fence. A clammy gray dawn was over all the unkempt little farm.

"Uppity kin," he growled. "Whoa there, Jumbo, back up a little! Back, I say! Yes, uppity. Trying to give you notions. I s'pose Selma Servaas says I ain't good enough for you, eh?"

She said nothing. Her sagging outline against the door gave him more visible evidence of the coming of the baby.

"Ain't a wife's place home with her husband, eh? But I ain't stopping you from runnin'. Go 'head."

This was irony.

"I can't leave the house, and you know it, without decent clothes. I ain't even got a hat left that I could go to a dog fight in. I'd be ashamed to be seen." She flared with resentment and defiance, her eyes challenging his.

He strode back to her, grabbed her bony arm, and swung her around. "That ain't the way to taunt yer pervider. But I ain't got time to 'tend to you now. The horses are waitin'."

But the memory of her sullen defiant eyes as she stood in the door of the unpainted sod-roofed shack, watching him drive away, stayed with him.

After a long day of slow jogging across a limitless prairie stretch broken by checkerboard fields he reached Fargo. But he did not delay there. He drove at once across the river to Moorhead, on the Minnesota side, to have a drink. Fargo, on the Dakota side of the river, had been voted dry by paternally minded city fathers. Moorhead was superlatively wet.

His thirst satisfied, he recrossed and once more rattled down Front Street, then found a hitching rail and tied his team to it.

Broadway was becoming so crowded with these danged automobiles. He preferred to walk down it. He walked rollingly over the city pavement as if the wavy sod of the prairie were billowing under his feet. It was nearly six o'clock on a Saturday night. The streets and pavements were crowded

with out-of-town shoppers. The stores would be open on Saturday until late.

It was then that he saw the hat in the window. It was the only one there. A background of gray. Some posies in a narrow vase had spilled red petals on the soft gray. And the hat itself was a simple little thing of black and red. A feeling of lordly generosity came over him. Ann should see that he was a good provider. He would buy the hat for her.

"Want that bunnit in the window for my wife," he huskily told the girl in the shop. He sized her up as an awful stylish girl if she hadn't been dressed so plain.

As he stood awkwardly by the door, waiting, he glanced around him. Kinda like a sitting room. Not many hats around either. Selling out, maybe. Or like as not they hadn't the money to stock up the place. Just one little hat in the window. Gosh! That was no way to sell. Likely as not he could get the hat dirt cheap.

The saleswoman also appraised him. But no one can judge a man in Fargo by his outer apparel—especially if that apparel be the accouterments of a farmer.

Tipping the hat over in her hands she named the price. "It's an importation from Paris," she murmured. "It was a special order." Her tone bespoke that some sacred thing was near.

The Parisian trademark in the soft silk lining meant nothing to him, but the price staggered him. Fifty dollars for a hat. That little black and red thing no bigger than your fists. He'd be jiggered! He had never known that a hat cost more than four dollars and ninety-eight cents. Anna had pointed to some in the village shop that were marked that much, and her eyes were longing. But he had thought five dollars too much for a hat. Anna's had cost—but it was so long since he had bought a hat for Anna that he had forgotten how much it cost. Fifty dollars! His eyes were dismayed.

"Is it this hat you wish?" inquired the salesgirl, turning it reverently about. She didn't expect to sell it to him. He could see that. Maybe she was laffin' at him—inside. She'd say, "A big hick come in . . . ." He gulped and nodded. "Sure—I'll take it."

He carefully went through all his pockets twice for a mislaid check book. "Must hev' forgot it to home." She guided him

to a counter checkbook. Some preliminary flourishes, a big scrawl and a blot, and then the hat, stowed in a neat round box with colored pictures on it, was his to carry away.

He carried it down the street, but not very far. He'd been crazy.

Fifty dollars for a hat for a female. It was a crime. It fostered women's vanity. It made them think themselves costly. Now, which of these places would he get the most for it?

He stopped farther up Broadway and Front Street before a brilliantly lighted department store all of four stories high. There was a window full of hats. Directed up an elevator. Almost a floor full of hats. Here he resold the Parisian hat and bought Anna a black sailor with a cabbage rose on it for three dollars.

It had meant thirty days.

And the hat, stowed under the seat of his wagon, was now all that he possessed for his strategy. He had lingered on the streets of Fargo the next two days. The young saleswoman, who had looked up his check immediately, had identified him and had him arrested.

Sentenced to thirty days in the county jail. He had checked off the days on the walls of his cell. All that time lost.

Anna's fault: whining and complaining about nothing to wear. Weren't women always saying that, anyway? And he, the generous, henpecked husband, had believed her. When he got home he would reason with her. 'Twas a man's duty toward weak woman.

He jogged over the rutty roads on the outskirts of Fargo with flat little buildings growing up from flat muddy places.

Thirty days. She had been big with a child. A son, of course. Although he had heard her say that she would like a daughter since she had lost their first, a little girl. But a little shaver, a boy, would be more useful when it came to doing the chores and running errands for his papa.

Thirty days. He wondered about the stock. Something might have happened to the stock without proper care. If Anna got to gadding, for instance. He'd better go home and see to the stock.

Natural for women to have babies, though. She needn't have looked so worrited. She wasn't the first woman in creation with a child. Nothing would happen. He wasn't worrit.

But before going home he must have money. It was necessary to keep Anna's respect for him. Life would not be the same—so full of thrills and power—if it were not for her. He dramatized himself before her in a variety of rôles. Her part to reflect wonder and amaze and sometimes fear of him. That was why her scornful look had stayed with him. Was he losing his grip on her? Yes, he had to have money. She ought to have come seen him, anyway. The livery man promised he'd tell her. Too stuck up because she was one of the Servaas girls. Only with money in his pocket could he make an effective home-coming and regain his ascendancy over her.

Before starting home he'd go to Moorhead and get a drink or two. The road home would be long and dusty. Hot fall sunshine spilled from the overflowing bowl of the sky. And a drink or two might start his brains working. "Giddap, Jumbo! Giddap, Stanley!" How the wooden bridge rumbled under their feet!

In Moorhead there were rows on rows of enticing saloons with damp penetrating aromas coming from behind closed doors. At Big Joe's Saloon they served a whopper of a lunch with the drinks. More terrible ruts that shook him into a greater thirst. Then the hitching rail before Big Joe's Saloon.

He slid into the place and took a seat at one of the tables in the rear near some men playing Norwegian whist. He was still afraid that someone might recognize him as the man who had been in jail for buying a hat for his wife—without a bank account. Not that he had given his own name. He was too smart for that. You bet!

Leaning against the bar were a score of thirsty harvesters in old overalls and dusty shirts. But their pocketbooks were full. As he watched the glasses of cool liquor slip down their throats a poignant sorrow gripped him. Tears stood in his blue eyes.

Presently Red Nels, of freckled features and lurid hair, turned and saw him sitting pensively there. He greeted him loudly: "Why, Kettlesrud, old feller. Why weren't you threshing this year? We missed you on our outfit. Good eats and big wages this year. Yessir. What's the matter, ole man. Sure, yo're lookin' down in the mouth."

Kettlesrud gulped and murmured. It might have been that way. He turned his head away and brushed his sleeve across his eyes.

"Not passed away! Pshaw now, fellers. Will you listen to that! Don't it beat hell? His wife just passed away and left him with a little baby, he sez. He and me threshed on the same outfit last fall. Come and hev a drink, old feller. Best trouble chaser invented. Don't it beat hell how things happen!"

He walked up to the bar and with his flowing black hair and mild beneficent regard stood looking like a prophet out of the Old Testament. As the hot liquid flowed down his throat he felt comforted and alight with ideas. Such sympathetic fellers as one found in the old saloons. He amplified the story of Anna's death, added pathetic details, and wiped his eyes surreptitiously. They showed their sympathy by treating. But he told himself not to get soused. There was brain work to be done. All was not yet accomplished.

So he waved back more glasses with a regretful sad gesture. "No more, fellers. I gotta go and buy her a coffin. Best coffin money can buy. Nothin's too good fer Anna. 'Talways was that way with me. Thanks. No more."

They wrung his hand with fellow feeling, murmuring as he strode out, "Pore old feller. Dod blasted shame."

He told the rotund, red-faced undertaker on the Moorhead side of the banks of the Red River. "God be merciful unto me. It is the Lord that gives. And He has taken away. Blessed be His Holy Name. So I try to be submissive to His Will." As he spoke he felt a keen pang of resigned sorrow at poor Anna's fate, a heart-broken regret mitigated only by religious balm.

He explained the need of a coffin for Anna immediately, blinking hard the while, and biting his under lip to keep it in control. "Don't hev' to hev' any certificates or anything, do I? Ain't got 'em with me."

Since Kettlesrud had just allied himself to the big family of Olsens—Valmar-Olsen; and since Old Man Valmar-Olsen owned one of the largest farms in the state, as well as one of the biggest broods of children, the undertaker waived the matter of certificates for the present. He was quite moved by the quiet distress and religious resignation of the man. He showed it in customary fashion. "Come up and have a—" Then he remembered the religious fervor and changed his original plan. "Come up and have a cup of coffee. We live upstairs over the shop, my wife and me. She's always got the coffee

pot on. Ya, we're Norske, that way. Come on up. You'll have a long drive across the prairie. No, well good luck." Then he coughed. He did not know whether it sounded sympathetic to offer good luck to a recently bereaved husband.

The coffin was loaded on the wagon, and Kettlesrud drove across the bridge into North Dakota. Undertakers, he told himself, were harpies preying on the sorrowful. Here he drew out a blue bandana, rather the worse for wear, and wiped his eyes. He was quite justified in getting the better of them. A coffin the better of them. He would sell it and have money to show to Anna.

Another undertaker's shop in Fargo on a side street. The lank Swede owner sprawled across the counter, picked his teeth, and listened sympathetically while the long-haired, good-looking but simple farmer huskily explained why he was trying to sell a coffin.

"It's been hell. The doctor said that Anna wouldn't live from one day to the next. I had to stop all farm work and care for her. The fields all rotted, but Anna was wuth more——"

He paused. He saw himself tenderly caring for a white-faced Anna who lay helpless, dependent upon him. He saw great overripe wheat fields spoiling for lack of a harvester. He gained control of himself and continued, quoting a Biblical verse concerning the things that come first.

"I had 'ter mortgage the farm to buy this coffin for her. Sent for it to mail-order house. Couldn't tend the fields, couldn't go to town. Only stayed there besides Anna. But she was getting well now. Gaining every day." He didn't s'pose the mail-order house would take the coffin back. He had kept it too long. He had to sell the coffin, however, to get delicacies for Anna. His name? Olsen. One of the Valmar-Olsens.

Richer by a hundred and fifty dollars he started at sunset across the prairies for home. Peace within and without. One hundred and fifty dollars in a fat wad in his leather wallet.

There was a time for everything. Even for sentiment about posies and sunsets. Anna always stared at both as if they were so much. Well, it was nice, this sunset. Gold spilled over the wide stubble fields, over the red foxtail and prairie grass, over the yellowing leaves of the fringe of trees on his right, where

the Red River ran. If only it could be harvested, this wash of gold. And if all the fields whereon it lay were his.

But soon all the gold faded to a monotone of gray except that there flowed on the horizon a great afterglow: like the lights of a palace seen through smoked glasses. Something beyond? Anna had said so. All women were religious-like.

God and the Bible were worth knowing, though. They had helped him out of many a fix. Hadn't they helped him to-day —in Moorhead, to get the coffin?

Night came on. The wagon jolted monotonously along in deep sandy ruts. A continuous hummock of grass in the center of the road. At least he wouldn't meet any of these dang automobiles on this road. If he did he wouldn't turn out for 'em. Let 'em honk and holler.

But say, with money in his pocket. Garn! Some day he might drive up before Anna in one of them contraptions. Then he'd get out and say, "That's the kind of man you married. The man that Selma Servaas says ain't good enough for you."

Jolted deeper into the ruts; blanketed deeper in a chilly grayness. What was beyond the grayness? He had seen headlines in the newspapers about bandits. He began intoning a hymn:

"Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high . . ."

Ah, that willow hedge showed that he was nearing the crossroads. Nearing home. How he would flourish the money before Anna! And tell tales of the discomforts of threshing. Sleeping in the hay in barns. Getting up at clammy dawn to the shrieks of the discordant threshing engines. It had been dang cold and uncomfortable. Meanwhile she had been snug at home doing nothing except care for the stock.

Or perhaps she had been gadding again. Running over to the Servaas Place and listening to whose women's tongues clacking against him. He had never been an unreasonable husband in his demands; never beat her up unless he was drunk. Yet she would not respect a simple little request of not to gad.

His muscles grew more cramped and the chill more pene-

trating. The horse blankets that he had wrapped about his legs weren't enough to keep him warm. He had to descend from the wagon and walk along beside it, beating his arms over his chest.

All the more vividly he painted his meeting with Anna. She'd have to get up. He'd see that she got out of her warm bed to welcome her lawful husband. He'd see that she listened to him while he talked and that her eyes stopped defying him. Yes, there it was finally. The Servaas Farm and the crossroads. Anna's old home; a big, square white farmhouse with all modern improvements; great barns in the background, and a thriving grove about all. Anna's people; a stiff-necked generation of vipers. Said he wasn't good enough for her, eh?

There was already light in the Servaas kitchen, although it was only half-past three.

He jogged on the few separating miles between the Servaas Place and his eighty. Father Servaas had given it to him as a wedding present. Enoch had expected at least a quarter section.

By the bleak light of the late moon his unpainted sod-roofed shack looked tenantless and starved. The gates to the grass-grown driveway swung open on sagging hinges. The pasture bars were down. The little trees that Anna had induced him to plant the first year after marriage, stripped of their leaves, looked like a grotesque row of broomsticks. Beyond was the barn—and the barn doors yawned wide.

There came a hunch that Anna had been careless about closing up the stock. He retrieved a lantern hanging from the kitchen porch and strode with stiff legs toward the swinging barn door. He stumbled against a rusty scythe hidden among the tall brown rustling weeds. Hell! Anna ought to pick up a thing or two.

In the barn he looked about him with growing anger, the hot waves mounting to his brain. Anna had not taken in the cattle. And the bars to the pasture had been down, so of course they had wandered afar. Wandered, and were now bloating up through overeating in some wheat field. It was time he came home and tended to things.

He made his way to the house and stamped into the kitchen with ominous loudness. He lighted the pressed-glass oil lamp that swung from a bracket over the kitchen table. By its

flickering yellow light he noted that the kitchen was dirty and uninviting.

"Anna. Anna. I want that you should get up," he ordered. He'd settle with her. "What you done to the stock?"

There was no reply. He tramped to the little bedroom, the lamp held high in his hand. "Anna," he ordered roughly again. "You get up."

An empty bed. No Anna.

She had gone to her mother's, of course. Gadding again, just as he had supposed. Listening to Selma Servaas say things against him. A heavy anger settled down upon him. He wasn't an unreasonable husband, as he had often told her. But a woman's place was in the house to welcome her husband instead of gadding about the neighborhood listening to gossip about him. He strode out into the yard and picked up the reins with hands that trembled.

"Giddap, you Jumbo. Giddap, Stanley." He jerked at the reins until the horses reared backward, settled down on four feet, and began a startled gallop.

Without knocking he tramped into the Servaas kitchen. "Selma Servaas, I want to know what you done to my wife. I won't have her gadding about here."

Selma was at the table gathering up the breakfast dishes. At his question she dropped the pile of plates that she had in her hands. They crashed to the floor and were broken into slivers. She stood staring at the plates with such a woebegone expression that Enoch laughed at her. She was so careful of her things. A thrifty housewife. Garn, but her look was funny! He rocked with mirth.

She turned on him. "Laugh, will you! You—you—prairie actor. Ha, ha! Funny, ain't it? Funny life for all us North Dakota farm women. Ha, ha!" Then she turned her back to him.

"I want to know where my wife is," he shouted, his teeth clicking tight on his laughter. "Here I come home after working hard all fall and find her gadding about. Where is she, I say? She's my wife."

Selma Servaas took her time stacking the remainder of the dishes in the big granite-iron dishpan. Then, wiping her hands on the roller towel by the sink, she wheeled about and faced him, replying deliberately slow: "Anna is dead—in childbirth.

Both her and the child are dead. She was alone. No one to take care of her. Your stock? They took it to pay for the coffin."

Enoch didn't speak. He just looked at her, tears welling out of his eyes. Then he said stupidly, "I—I had a coffin."

PROFESSIONAL PRIDE

BY RUTH BURR SANBORN

FROM *Ladies' Home Journal*

RUTH BURR SANBORN'S

stories are familiar to all readers of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, McCALL'S, THE BOOKMAN *and others. She has done both newspaper work and advertising and says that she owes her literary proficiency to English 5, Professor Charles T. Copeland's course at the Harvard Graduate School.*

I HAVE come to measure the freaks," said Perry Wilder firmly. It was a situation which required firmness. For Perry Wilder had just walked in through a door marked Strictly No Admittance and was having his first view of the private life of the freak, as displayed behind the scenes of the Saracen Brothers' Seven Seas Shows.

In one corner Harry Highboy, the Human Spire, was sitting on the floor, with the Tom Thumb family on his knee; and beside him Minnie of Minneapolis, the Fattest Girl in the World, was eating ice cream out of a paper carton while the Living Skeleton watched her wistfully. Conrad, the Contortionist, and Lily, the Girl with the Leopard's Spots, were playing catch with an empty ginger-pop bottle.

"Advanced case of progressive depigmentation," murmured Perry Wilder—and turned quickly to face a little bulbous man in buttons who popped up at his elbow and seemed to be in charge of things.

"Afternoon pufformance is over," the man said, his words popping out of his pursed lips in a series of explosions. "Evenin' pufformance at eight-thirty."

"I know it," said Perry Wilder, taking a harder grip on his instrument case to reassure himself. "That's why I came now. I——"

"Evenin' pufformance at eight-thirty," repeated the attendant. "Advance sale of tickets outside. No visitors between pufformances."

"But I'm not a visitor exactly," Perry began. "I'm——"

"Relative or friend?"

"Well, no, not exactly. I'm——"

"Lookin' for a job?"

Perry Wilder felt a warmth rising in his cheeks; he felt it also in his ears and his forehead and in the back of his neck; and it was not altogether the result of the baking July day. Perry was not a vain man, but he had always taken it for granted that there was nothing outright freakish about him.

The attendant eyed suspiciously the case under Perry's arm. "If that's a sword," he said, "it's no use. We got a sword swallower."

"It's calipers," said Perry. "I'm an anthropologist."

"We haven't got one o' those," the man admitted doubtfully. "But we don't go in much for fakers."

"But I'm an anthropologist, I tell you," Perry repeated desperately. "I tell you I came to measure the freaks. I'm McGregor Shillabee's assistant, and he arranged with Mr. Eikenweiker for me to measure them."

"Oh," said the attendant. "So you're that one!" Mr. Eikenweiker was the only living Saracen Brother of the Seven Seas, and his name carried weight. Nevertheless, the shrug with which he received Perry Wilder's statement and the look which he gave him out of his pop-eyes said somewhat plainer than speech could say that when it came to freaks there were a lot of things more freakish than human spires or the fattest girl in the world. At the moment Perry Wilder was inclined to feel that perhaps he might be right.

He looked about for a place to begin, and his eye fell upon Minnie of Minneapolis—naturally, as one's eye falls upon an elephant or a whale or a watermelon in a dish of plums. "Endocrine disturbance," he muttered, hurrying forward to introduce himself. And he added hastily, "I want to measure you. I——"

"Six hundred and forty-two and three quarters," said Minnie automatically, burying another spoonful of cream somewhere in the fat folds of her face.

Perry averted his glance. "I don't mean just that," he explained. "I want your head measurements and so on."

"Not much!" replied the fat girl. She turned her head slightly—slightly was as far as she could turn it—and called. "Harry! Come and tell this reuben where he gets off."

Harry Highboy, the Human Spire, scooped up the Tom Thumb family, set it on the floor, and rose to his full height.

"Pituitary giantism," muttered Perry involuntarily. It is surprising how tall a pituitary giant looks when you're looking up at him; a good view is afforded of his coat buttons and the underside of his chin.

"Where he gets off?" repeated Harry loudly. "If you say so, he gets off right here."

Perry Wilder had not thought well in the first place of this scheme of measuring the circus freaks for Shillabee's gland study. Now he thought less highly of it than ever. Nevertheless, when McGregor Shillabee makes a suggestion, young scientists intent on getting on in science do not argue about it overmuch.

And then of course there was Judith Tremaine. Perry Wilder, in common with about a hundred other young men, would have suffered more than this for Judith. When he remembered the way she had looked up at him last night, there in the shadow of the rose hedge in the Tremaine garden, it made him feel able to do anything.

Judith had been in white last night—white with a hint of pink flowers cascading down a shoulder, that yet had not been half so warm and lovely a rose as the color in her own cheeks. The white dress and the smell of the damp roses in the dark —that and the nearness of Judith Tremaine herself, half seen in the moonlight—had gone to Perry's head. He had put out a hand and touched her; drawn her close.

For the first time he had dared to talk about his future. Perry was a young man who took anthropology seriously but not himself—who took Judith seriously, too, but not any other girl—and she listened to him attentively. He told her all about McGregor Shillabee, the fierce old scientist who broke the furniture when things did not go right and for whom it was an honor to work, whether things went right or not. If he did well for him, he said, why then——

"Oo," said Judith. "I think anthropology is thrilling." At the moment it had seemed pretty thrilling to Perry Wilder too. "And what'll you do then?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Perry largely. "Whatever comes up. I might get a research job. Or I might get a chance to take out an expedition." He saw himself, a heroic figure, pressing through impenetrable jungle, his little band of men, dismayed but confident in him, close at his heels.

"And where would you go?" asked Judith. "Would you go to tropic islands?"

"I might," said Perry. "There's a good bit of work still to be done there in the Pacific."

"I love tropic islands," said Judith dreamily. "There's always a moon—at night, I mean, like this—and a white beach;

and the sea is always very warm; and the girls wear hibiscus flowers in their hair."

It was the thought of Judith on a white moonlit beach that completely unmanned Perry Wilder. "I—I guess you'd look pretty wonderful with a hibiscus flower in your hair," he mumbled. And he pulled down a pink rose and stuck it timidly behind her small pink ear, just to get the effect.

It was right after that that he kissed her. It had seemed daring at the time, but not half so daring as it seemed the next morning.

The next morning, indeed, everything seemed different. The time when he should be conducting independent research or leading his own expedition into far lands had withdrawn to a hypothetical future. And in the present there were the freaks in the Saracen Brothers' Seven Seas Shows.

Perry Wilder had not mentioned the freaks to Judith. He had meant to at first; but afterward, when their fancies had strayed to tropic isles, he had been afraid the circus freaks would not seem very romantic to her. They had not seemed very romantic to Perry, either. They had seemed, in fact, like a pretty darned tough proposition, and he was not sure that he would tackle it. At least, he was not sure until after he had kissed Judith. After that he knew that he would tackle anything, no matter how thoroughly awful, that would advance him in the eyes of science.

And the eyes of science, for the moment, were the keen old eyes of McGregor Shillabee.

McGregor Shillabee was doing a problem in gland diseases, and Perry Wilder was his assistant. If Perry hurried fast on his round of the city clinics, if he recorded accurately the Shillabee observations and read the X-ray plates correctly and never made a mistake in his measurements and in general showed intelligence and energy somewhat more than human, then when the monograph was published there would be, just below the line, "By McGregor Shillabee, Ph.D.," another more delightful line, bearing the legend, "Assisted by Perry Wilder."

Shillabee never kept his young assistants long after such a line was published; it was too thorough a guarantee of ability. He never expected to keep them. It was his theory that part

of the service of old men to science was the training of young men for science, and when his assistants were ready for better jobs he was ready to have them go.

When McGregor Shillabee marched into the office that morning you would never have picked him out to be a scientist himself; not, that is, if your idea of a scientist was a nearsighted, dry-as-dust old philosopher, with a quill pen stuck behind his ear and a test tube in his hand. Shillabee was known to be seventy-five; some said he was eighty; some, more. But he walked with the firm, light tread of youth—a great, hulking tower of a man, with a smooth, fiery face and a beaked nose, a shock of white hair and black eyes that never missed a thing. He looked like a man who would play a whacking game of golf and like beefsteak for breakfast.

It was not strange, therefore, that when Shillabee chose assistants he never chose the paper-faced young men with bone-rimmed spectacles, those who do so well in their books but who never know which end of the world's oyster shell to take hold of without cutting their fingers. He chose the straight-standing, straight-looking young men with the keen faces, who enjoyed working and playing and living; the kind who could go until they dropped and then get right up and go some more.

Somebody asked him once what he required of them. "Good guts," he said, "and a sense of humor." You can see that it was something ever to be employed by him at all.

Perry Wilder had worked for Shillabee a year—a tall, brown youth with gray eyes and a nice grin and a way of standing up to things. It was characteristic of him that if he did not enjoy the thought of measuring the circus freaks you would never have guessed it to look at him that morning.

If McGregor Shillabee knew how he felt you would never have guessed that either just by looking at Shillabee.

"Well," he boomed, stamping noisily in, "how's everything going?"

"All right," said Perry.

"When you going to get to work on the freaks?"

"At five," said Perry, bolstering his resolution by thinking hard of Judith Tremaine.

"Good," said Shillabee.

And that was all there was to that. At five that afternoon

Perry Wilder was talking things over with Minnie of Minneapolis.

"I won't be measured, so there, I won't," said Minnie with finality. "If you dar'st to lay a finger onto me I'll have Harry pick you up and throw you outer the tent. And then where'll you be?"

"I suppose I'd be outside," said Perry logically.

Perry did not measure Minnie of Minneapolis that afternoon. There were twenty-four of the freaks whom Shillabee wanted for his study; Perry had a list in his pocket, and Minnie headed it. Still, he reckoned that it would take him two days to do them all, no matter how fast he hurried, and he might as well leave Minnie till the end.

Perry Wilder had seldom hurried faster than he hurried that afternoon. He did the entire Tom Thumb family, the Girl with the Leopard's Spots, Conrad, the Contortionist, Acho and Echo, the Twin Enigmas, the Snake Woman, the Orang-Utan Man, and Skilton, the Living Skeleton. Then he packed up his calipers in their case and called it a day and a half.

When he reached home, shortly after nine, Perry found that there had been a telephone call from Judith. He was excited. Judith had never called him before, and he could not but count it a good augury. He jerked down the receiver and stuttered with pure pleasure over her telephone number. There was something about it, though, that wasn't right.

"Hello," said Judith. "Mr. Wilder?" ("Mr. Wilder" indeed!) "I'm sorry to have bothered you."

"Oh, it's no bother," cried Perry. "Not any bother. I was glad. I just came home from work. You—you called me, didn't you?"

"Did I? Why, perhaps I did," said Judith Tremaine, as if she could hardly remember now having done such a thing. "But it's no matter."

"It's a lot of matter," cried Perry. "I'll be right over."

"It's rather late now for dinner."

"Say, were you going to have dinner with me?" cried Perry in tones of pure rapture.

The rapture lasted all the way across the city, up the steps

of the Tremaine house and into the library where Judith was. After that it left him.

For one thing, Judith insisted on staying inside—which was absurd, when the garden and the roses and the moon were every bit as good as they had been the night before. And she insisted also on having the lights full on and the curtains full up, including those which opened onto the terrace where the elder Tremaines and their guests were sitting, so that the thing was about as private and sentimental as a public square on Fourth of July. Perry Wilder sat erect in a stiff-backed chair, and Judith sat erect in a stiff-backed chair opposite, and they looked at each other. Judith was annoyingly self-possessed.

The fact was that Judith had thought to escape a fusty family dinner by ducking out to dine alone with Perry Wilder and she had called him up to tell him so. And now she was feeling the unreasonable but thoroughly human pique that any young lady feels who has invited herself to go out with a man and then has not gone.

You could not expect, however, that Perry Wilder should know this. All he could see was that Judith's round chin was about an inch and a half higher than it had been the night before, and her color a shade and a half brighter, and her clear blue eyes just as clear but a trifle less inviting. It was borne in upon him suddenly that Judith was the daughter of old Gordon (Gold-Brick) Tremaine and that he himself was a presuming young scientist with three thousand a year.

"You work late," said Judith.

"Sometimes," Perry replied.

He thought he had never seen anything so lovely as Judith was, sitting there so annoyingly out of reach. She had fair hair, long. Perry found long hair refreshing, after a surfeit of sleek little boys' heads or clumps of furious waviness such as ladies now displayed. She wore it straight back and in a soft knot at the neck, and in front of her ears and across her forehead the short ends slid out into small rebellious curls. There was something rebellious, too, in the poise of her head and the tip in the end of her nose—as if she would do as she liked, despite the Tremaine gold.

She hesitated for a moment. But Judith was a downright

young person, and she brought it out flatly enough in the end. "I called up your office too," she said. "And you weren't there."

"Why, no," said Perry in some confusion. "No, I wasn't there. I was at the circus. I——"

"You were at the circus—working?" There was a note of derision in Judith's laughter that made Perry uncomfortable.

"Well, yes, I was working all right," he began. "You see——"

"I see you're trying to spoof me," said Judith, laughing lightly. "You were out with some other girl, telling her how well she'd look with a hibiscus flower in her hair!"

Perry Wilder was himself seized with untimely laughter at the thought of Minnie of Minneapolis dancing on a moonlit beach, with a hibiscus flower in her bleached and frizzled bob. "She'd look terrible," he burst out hilariously. He was at once aware of added restraint in an atmosphere already a trifle too restrained. "Look here," he added, "I want to explain. Last night maybe I gave you a wrong impression. I——"

He could see that he was making it worse with every word. But it was just the devil's own luck that at that instant the party on the terrace outside should have come trailing in—Gordon Tremaine and his sleek wife, gleaming with success and jewels and good food; four guests, gleaming with satisfaction at having been asked to dine with the Tremaines.

"How do you do," Mr. Tremaine said, grasping Perry's hand with impersonal heartiness. "Two of you. Good. We can have some bridge."

So then bridge they had; three hours of it. Perry had never thought himself a brilliant player, but he had never played so badly as he played that night.

"You must be thinking of something else," said Mr. Tremaine with a sly twinkle.

"I am," said Perry miserably.

He did not see Judith alone again. The party broke up all together, and Perry moved toward the door between a large woman in black and silver and a small man incased in a tight collar. He made a desperate clutch at a floating end of green chiffon that was a part of Judith's dress.

"When can I see you again?" he blurted.

Perhaps Judith took pity on his hot confusion. Perhaps she

did not wish to seem ungracious—in case anyone overheard. "To-morrow night for dinner?"

Perry Wilder's high color heightened perceptibly. "I have to go to the circus again," he said. "But after that——"

"After that," said Judith calmly. "I'm afraid I shall be busy."

It is a little hard when the very thing you are doing for the sake of the only girl in the world is suddenly the very thing that is standing most in your way.

The next day Perry measured all the rest of the freaks—all, that is, except Minnie of Minneapolis. He even did the Human Spire, who sat on the floor so that Perry would reach his head, and obligingly told him all about his pituitary headaches and how well he could play tennis if only he had someone his own size to play with. He kept an eye to Minnie as he talked, and Perry saw that he was showing off before her, proud of his headaches and his tennis and his mighty height.

"All ready for you now," Perry said to Minnie with a show of confidence greater than he felt.

"I ain't a-goin' to be measured," said Minnie stubbornly.

Perry urged her. "Oh, come! It won't take but a few minutes. Everybody else has been."

"I ain't everybody else," said Minnie.

This, of course, was true. Perry moved up a chair and sat down as near to Minnie as possible—it was not possible to sit very near because of Minnie herself—prepared to argue, to cajole. At first he thought she wished to be teased. Now he saw that there was purpose behind her stubbornness. Her little bright eyes shone out at him keenly from their wells of flesh, and there was a sudden overlapping in the folds of her chin that showed determination.

Perry was appalled by Minnie, by the sheer mass and bulk of her.

Still, the fatter Minnie of Minneapolis was the more precious she would be to McGregor Shillabee's study. And if McGregor Shillabee told you to measure twenty-four freaks and you came back with twenty-three you might just as well not come back at all.

Perry leaned forward to give to his attitude a little more intimacy, a little more warmth of personal appeal. For an

instant he was aware of the shadow of the Human Spire towering in the background; then the shadow passed. "Come, now," he said, "tell me what's the reason you don't want me to measure you. I don't believe there is a reason."

"Yes, there is," said Minnie.

Perry saw that there was. Somewhere behind impenetrable walls of flesh, behind the little shining eyes there was something definite, a reason beyond coyness or malice.

"You only want to measure me because I'm funny," she said. "If I was like anybody else you wouldn't pay no attention to me."

The simplicity and the truth of it took away Perry's speech. "You mustn't say that," he began lamely.

"It's so, though," said Minnie. "And I'm about sick of the whole of it, see? Everybody gaping at me with their mouth open. I can't never have no fun. Can't go to the theater 'cause I can't set in the seats. Can't go in a boat 'less'n it would sink. Nobody like you wouldn't ast me to go nowheres. And now you want to measure me! Say!"

Accumulated grudges shone in Minnie's perspiring face, and all at once Perry was sorry for her. It struck him that from Minnie's point of view his scientific curiosity was no better than the curiosity of the crowds. He felt as if he ought to make it up to her somehow.

"I don't feel that way about you," he offered.

"What way?"

"Er—that way," explained Perry.

Minnie seemed to understand him only too well. "You mean you like me?" she inquired.

"Er—yes," said Perry.

"You mean you want to measure me because you like me?"

"Well," said Perry, hoping he was not lying too grossly, "yes. I suppose you might put it that way."

Minnie of Minneapolis was pleased, and yet she was skeptical too. Her small eyes narrowed and sharpened, with an oddly satisfied kind of calculation. "Tell you what I'll do," she said finally. "If you'll take me out and not tell anybody why, I'll let you measure me."

At first Perry did not understand her. "Out?" he echoed.

"Yeah," said Minnie, waving a hand largely. "Out somewheres. On a party. Me and you. As if I was anybody."

At first, before the full enormity of the idea, Perry was dumb. Then he saw suspicion dawning; he saw the ground that he had gained being lost. "What kind of a party?" he mumbled, to gain time.

"Oh, I dunno," said Minnie. "I hear it's pretty swell down to Paradise Park."

Perry grew hot and cold with horror. Paradise Park was one of the public amusement grounds subject to hot dogs and merry-go-rounds and gum. He licked his dry lips. "Well, I'm pretty busy, of course, right now——"

In so far as was possible, Minnie's face hardened. "You don't hafter go," she said shortly. "And you don't hafter measure me either."

Perry Wilder saw himself fairly caught—on the one hand, McGregor Shillabee with Perry's future in his pocket, waiting for the completed list of data about the circus freaks; on the other, Minnie of Minneapolis and Paradise Park. As for Judith Tremaine——But he did not dare to think just then of Judith.

"You couldn't be away, could you?" he asked, upon an inspiration.

But Minnie was ready for him. "We could go in the morning. I could get off once riding in the pee-rade, and then I don't come on till four. We'd have all day. It'd hafter be tomorrer, 'cause we're leavin'."

Perry shuddered. "Wouldn't it be too hard for you? Wouldn't you get awfully tired?"

"No," said Minnie.

"Wouldn't you rather have a nice long ride and see the ocean?"

"No," said Minnie.

"Wouldn't you rather go on a nice picnic in the country—just we two together?"

"No," said Minnie. "Come at ten."

Perry Wilder returned to his home that night a broken man and wrote a letter to Judith Tremaine which he afterward tore up.

The next morning at nine o'clock Perry Wilder was in his office, and he had no intention of being anywhere else that day. There are some things that no man is called upon to bear, even in the cause of science.

At nine-five McGregor Shillabee came in. "Freaks done?" he inquired.

"All but the fattest girl in the world," said Perry feelingly.

"The best of the lot. Unless I'm mistaken, she's going to prove my point about the thyroid." Shillabee added carelessly, "Circus is leaving town to-morrow, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Have to hurry up with her."

Perry returned, without answering, to his work on a list of standard means and deviations. He said to himself that he wasn't going to make a bally fool of himself, not for anybody.

"I wish you'd bring me those proof sheets for the introduction to the gland study," said Shillabee presently.

Perry went downstairs and got them. He had not seen them before, and he looked idly over the first of the long galleys in his hand; as he did so his eyes widened and his breath caught. For he had come upon a line which read: "By McGregor Shillabee, Ph.D." And under it, in only slightly smaller type, another line: "Assisted by Perry Wilder." Only, against this line, in the margin, scrawled down with blue pencil in Shillabee's large, unmistakable hand, appeared the laconic question: "Let it stand?" and a trailing blue question mark all down the page.

Perry laid the sheets before Shillabee, with the big blue question mark on top. Shillabee knew that he had seen it. Perry knew he had been sent so that he would see it.

But when Shillabee spoke it was absently. "The C. R. Waddington Howes Foundation is sending out an expedition to Triona Island. They haven't appointed anyone yet to take charge."

He left it at that. But everyone knew that the C. R. Waddington Howes Foundation looked to Shillabee for appointees. Triona was a tropic isle complete with moonlit beaches and hibiscus. . . .

Perry came back sharply to the present with Shillabee's next words, "You'd better hurry up with that fat girl." It was at once a threat and a promise.

At ten o'clock Perry drew up at the back door of the circus in the strongest-looking taxicab the city afforded, the driver grinning in the front. Minnie of Minneapolis was waiting for him.

For this gala occasion Minnie had laid aside the crimson velvet of professional life and appeared in a sleeveless flowered chiffon of red and pink roses. Her bare arms were heavy with bracelets and earrings whose jingling tassels of red stones dropped from the plump lobes of her ears. She carried a bead bag and a red umbrella.

"Hello, cutie," she greeted him.

"Hello," said Perry bravely.

It had been Perry's original intention to use his own car. More mature reflection, however, had shown him that to think of putting Minnie into his coupé would be a parallel to the famous case of the camel and the needle's eye. The taxicab door was an obstacle, of course. But by letting back the top and building a bridge of heavy timbers from one of the show platforms over the side of the car and into the seat, he succeeded finally in getting Minnie shipped.

A crowd gathered to see them off—riders and clowns and acrobats and snake and lion tamers and trapeze workers. Perry's ears burned redder with every remark he overhead.

"Why don't yuh take her arm, bo? Where's yuh manners?"

"Why'n't yuh take the circus wagon? That's built strong a-purpose."

"Easy on the springs, there, Minnie."

Only Harry Highboy, the Human Spire, did not say anything. He lolled against the steam calliope, flushed and pouting like a nine-foot child who sees someone else playing with his toy; it struck Perry, incredible as it seemed, that Harry Highboy was jealous.

Once inside the gates of Paradise Park—a matter of no small moment, since the turnstile was out of the question and Minnie had to be taken round to the rear and admitted through a pair of swing gates designed for the passage of motor trucks—things were even worse. The board walk bent and buckled beneath their tread. But Minnie was delighted.

"I guess I'll have a quart of ice cream first," she said. "I have to keep eating. Every time I gain ten pounds I get my pay raised."

Minnie ate a quart of ice cream, a bag of peanuts, a bag of buttery pop corn, which she smeared on Perry's sleeve, three hot dogs with mustard, four doughnuts, and a wedge of cherry pie.

"Oh, lookit!" she cried. "There's a merry-go-round. We'll be just in time to ride on it before dinner."

"I don't believe——" began Perry.

"If I can't ride on the merry-go-round," said Minnie with finality, "why, then I won't be measured."

Afterward the events which followed were all a dark confusion, whirling as fast in Perry's mind as ever the merry-go-round whirled. He remembered things in snatches.

There was the merry-go-round itself, where he tipped the proprietor ten times what he could afford and promised to pay any damages that might ensue; six workmen at a dollar apiece were employed to help boost Minnie aboard.

"I choose to ride on the elephant," said Minnie without humor.

The elephant's back was broken in the end, and one of its hind legs collapsed. Perry had to make a down payment and leave his name with the authorities.

After that there was dinner: "Chicken, Steak or Lobster—$2." Perry arranged for a private dining room and a couch for Minnie to sit on; he had visions of a year's salary vanished in a single day.

"What will you have?" he asked weakly.

"Chicken, steak and lobster, of course," said Minnie.

And after that there were the scenic railway and the hoochie coochie and the dancing floor. There was the joggling board, where the crowd first grew to unwieldy proportions. Then the shoot the chutes, where Minnie was nearly killed, and Perry Wilder with her. And the phantom boats. Perry never liked to think much afterward about those phantom boats.

But of the House of Wonders and what befell there, every detail was too sharply etched on Perry's mind for him ever to forget one smallest part of it.

Perhaps something warned him even before he went in. At any rate, he objected. "Oh, you don't want to go there. It's too much like a circus."

"That's just it," said Minnie.

Well, there's human nature for you! The postman goes on a vacation and takes a long walk morning and afternoon; the bus driver drives three thousand miles in his week off; and Minnie of Minneapolis, from the Seven Seas Shows, wants to go to the House of Wonders to see the sword swallower

swallow the sword! "If I can't go," she began ominously, "why then——"

"Oh, all right," said Perry hastily.

Earlier in the day the crowd had been large, but it had not been enormous. Now it grew rapidly. When Minnie and her escort went into the House of Wonders about a thousand other people went in after them. From time to time remarks from the mob penetrated to Perry's tingling ears.

"Aw, lookit her legs! How's she stand on 'em?"

"He's her keeper."

"He is not. He's her boy friend."

Minnie bore these things with the poise possible only to one who is much in the public eye. But a change had come over her manner, nevertheless. At first she had been so delighted with everything. Now she fell sullen. And presently she came out with it; Minnie was not one to conceal her true feelings.

"You ain't got much pep, have you?" she remarked.

"Pep?" echoed Perry. It seemed to him that he had had a pretty peppy day.

"It's a wonder you wouldn't hold my hand or something."

Perry shuddered. He reached out in a gingerly way and took one of Minnie's hands; it required both of his to hold it.

It was at that moment that the blow fell.

Hitherto Perry had schooled himself resolutely not to look at the crowd, sparing himself unpleasant details. Now, moved by the curious compulsion that one sometimes feels, he looked.

At a little distance, apart from the gum-chewing, pop-corn-and-buttery crowd, extraordinarily lovely in white linen and a bright coat, a white felt hat pulled down tight, and her blue eyes, as clear and cool as wood lakes under its curling brim, stood—Judith Tremaine. No one had ever looked so beautiful and so scornful and so divinely slim as Judith Tremaine looked then.

Judith was not alone. Grouped about her, a little closer than seemed necessary, were four young men—those faultless young men whose linen knickers are beyond reproach and whose sweaters match their socks. They looked cool and faultless and incapable of getting into the kind of mess that Perry Wilder was in. And they were all laughing.

Judith Tremaine was not laughing at all. But her look of incredulity was even harder to bear.

Perry snatched his hand away as if Minnie's fingers had burned him. He was sharply aware that his own gray business suit was heavier than the warmth of the day demanded and that his collar was withered at the roots. He was aware that he carried Minnie's red umbrella and the bead bag, together with a reserve of ice-cream cones, dripping lavishly. But most of all he was aware of Minnie herself, six hundred and forty-two and three quarters in flowered chiffon.

He wished for the faith that will remove mountains. But he did not have it. And so the mountain remained.

Perry remained also, stood his ground beside Minnie of Minneapolis, and faced Judith and the four young men.

In a moment they were all about him.

"Won't you introduce us to your friend?" said the most perfect of them all—he with the sleek fair hair and the butter-colored eyebrows.

They were very cruel, those young men.

"It isn't often," they said, "that we have an opportunity like this to meet a celebrity."

And "Have you known Miss—ah—Minneapolis long?"

And "Aren't you ashamed to keep her to yourself and not give your friends a chance to meet her?"

Only Judith remained aloof. She nodded briefly at Perry's strangled effort at an introduction and stood apart, not saying much. It puzzled Perry why she should be there at all. Paradise Park was not the place where you expected to meet a girl like Judith.

A kind of frenzy seized Perry Wilder. He was oppressed by the need of explaining to Judith—and by the impossibility of it. There was that promise to Minnie: that he wouldn't tell. And yet he could not bear Judith's look, that scornful small lift of the head that assumed that he was there because he wanted to be. He tried to draw her a little aside.

"Look here," he said. "You don't understand."

"I'm afraid I don't," said Judith.

She turned. And Perry turned too, not daring to let her go; caught her urgently by the sleeve. For an instant he thought it was going to be all right.

Then she drew away. "Don't let's be conspicuous," she said.

"Here, cutie," called Minnie loudly. "Where's them ice-cream cones? Can't you see I'm ready for another? It's a wonder you wouldn't pass 'em round, stingy."

"Oh, I couldn't think of robbing you," said the four young men in unison.

"Conspicuous!" groaned Perry. "Oh, my Lord!"

Judith moved away again, and Perry crept back to Minnie's side with the dripping ice-cream cones. But already it was too late to avert catastrophe.

"Go on off with your old drippings," she said. "What kind of a party do you think this is, huh? Here you say you'll take me on a party just like anybody. And how do you act? The minute this jane shows up you're all off me. Hanging onto her coat sleeve. Pawing onto her arm. Looking at her like your eyes would bust out. Did you do any hanging onto me to-day? You did not. Go an' measure her, if you want to measure some body. You can't measure me, see?"

The words poured forth in a torrent impossible to check.

To Perry Wilder there came a feeling of hopelessness such as comes to the shipwrecked sailor when the last spar is water-logged and sinks. Perry had not often failed, but he now tasted defeat.

He had failed with Judith; that was plain. And now he had failed with Minnie. He would not get the measurements, and he would not get the Triona job, and Judith . . .

Still, even a drowning man will make an attempt to swim. Perry Wilder, even in the midst of his despair, tried to mitigate the horror of his immediate situation. "Look," he said hoarsely, pointing at random in an effort to distract her attention. The next moment he could have bitten his tongue for his own lack of discretion.

For Minnie emitted a sudden roar, beside which her former tones had been but mutterings, and charged through the crowd. At the roar of the room over some curtains was a sign which read:

RUTH OF DULUTH
THE FATTEST GIRL IN THE WORLD

Minnie burst through those curtains as if they had not been there, careless of the presence of the gatekeeper, who was a

small man and inclined under the circumstances to be discreet. Perry Wilder was swept in after her by the set of the crowd in that direction. So were the four young men. So was Judith.

Inside the curtains was a strong-looking platform and a strong-looking armchair set upon it. And in the armchair, splendid in royal purple and gold bandles, her top chin resting on her lower chins and her lower chins resting on her chest, sat Ruth of Duluth.

Ruth of Duluth was fat; there was no denying it. But Minnie of Minneapolis was fatter.

For an instant Minnie stood still, viewing her rival in the spirit in which a whale might view a minnow who had put up a sign claiming to be the greatest of fishes. Minnie pointed at her the fat finger of scorn.

"Why, you little pill!" she cried. "You little old string off a string bean! You little stunted runt of a spinach root! You fat? Why, you don't know what fat is. A skeleton would be juicy 'longside of you. A famine wictim would look like he just got up from the dinner table. If the malnutrition society could git an eye onto you, they'd take up a collection to keep you f'm starving to death." She turned with regal scorn to face her audience, and her eye fell on Perry Wilder; an inspiration struck Perry, and he lifted his instrument case. Professional pride did the rest. "Come on up here and measure the both of us," said Minnie, "and we'll see which is the fattest."

It was a horrible moment, with Judith there watching. But Perry Wilder was not a man to turn back once he had faced a goal. He clutched the case more firmly in his hand and stepped forward to mount the platform.

It was then that Judith Tremaine did a supremely gracious thing.

"Don't you want me to help you, Perry?" she said clearly. "Let me take your notebook and I'll record for you."

Perry was never sure afterward what happened after that. Only somehow the measurements for Minnie of Minneapolis and Ruth of Duluth were safe in his pocket together, and he had records for twenty-five freaks, where Shillabee had asked for twenty-four; the four young men had been dismissed by Judith with instructions to telephone for Harry Highboy to take Minnie home.

Minnie was complacent. "Harry Highboy is the tallest man in the world," she said to Ruth of Duluth. "When he sees you he'll just laugh. He likes a girl with some size." She waved a hand magnificently to Perry. "I guess you mean all right," she said, "but when I go out on a party I guess I'd rather go with somebody kind of distinguished—like Harry."

Perry Wilder certainly did not look distinguished now; he looked hot and disordered, and his hair was on end.

Judith laughed a shade unsteadily. "It's certainly wonderful what professional pride will do."

"It's nothing to what love will do," said Perry boldly. He saw that he did not need to explain much after all, because Judith understood. "I did it for you," he said; for the moment that seemed to cover everything. Then he went rushing on: "Now I guess I'm going to have a chance with an expedition. Shillabee as good as said . . . Triona Island . . . White beaches and hibiscus. . . ."

Judith lifted her head with a kind of shamefaced pride. "What a perfect place for a honeymoon!" she said.

"Do you mean it?" cried Perry. And suddenly he had drawn Judith close, as he had that night in the Tremaine garden—only a lot closer. "Do you?"

"Silly!" said Judith softly. "Why else would I have been chasing you all over Paradise Park?"

And after that it was just plain Paradise.

MRS. SABIN

BY CAROLINE SLADE

FROM *Plain Talk*

CAROLINE SLADE

is a well known newspaper woman. At present she is a Social Worker for Saratoga County, New York, and is particularly interested in the Juvenile Court. In her stories Miss Slade has observed both workers and their victims.

THAT makes fourteen this morning," Mrs. Sabin said to herself. Mr. Sabin was apt to be a trifle crotchety if there was too much talk, so most of Mrs. Sabin's conversation was self-communing.

She put the fifteenth cake on the griddle, but Mr. Sabin had finished his breakfast. He pushed back his chair with energy and drew on a pair of heavy boots. Mrs. Sabin turned the griddle cake with the calculated flop of experience and watched it as it cooked. She put it on her plate, poured coffee, and sat down on the edge of her chair.

Mr. Sabin went to the water pail and filled the dipper, drinking with audible appreciation; and what was left in the dipper he returned to the pail. Mrs. Sabin waited expectantly.

The words came, as they came every morning, without the variation of a comma.

"That's fine water; best they is."

"It is so, Mr. Sabin," replied Mrs. Sabin. She had always called him Mr. Sabin, because she had hired out to his first wife and had formed the habit then.

He nodded, took his straw hat from its nail, looked at the clock, and went out of the door.

Mrs. Sabin immediately began to talk.

"Nearly six o'clock," she observed pleasantly to the quiet room, "and my head's commenced aching a'ready."

She drank her coffee quickly, poured another cup, and dipped her spoon into the sugar bowl. Leaning back in her chair, she sipped with a strange air of daring. Her eyes straying to the clock were jerked back before she caught the time —by real effort of will she kept from the knowledge of correct time for fifteen minutes.

"I never lolled so in all my life," she said in pleased tones, and at once felt very weird and wicked.

"Two more cows' got calfs on. Not much milk to see to. No churning for a week, mebbe. If we eat more gravy the butter'll last out. I could wash to-day, but I ain't going to." So struck was she by her own devilishness that she paused in

the business of eating to listen to her own words. "He wouldn't change his shirt this week, and I donno as I care."

At once she felt that anything might happen now. Dim memories of the stories of floods, wars, plagues, and other modes of punishment crowded into her mind. She leaned back more comfortably in her chair—the chair with the edge worn smooth and to an incline, with the cane seat unbroken, the back unmarred.

"Land's sake," said Mrs. Sabin, "I wonder what's come over me." And ate at her leisure, but with a feeling of awe at her daring. Breakfast over, she brought out her heavy dishpan and started to wash and dry the dishes.

"Some folks stack," she remarked to it; "but dishes laying around give me the fidgets."

She talked to each cup, each plate, each knife and fork. She spoke of the weather, the work in the fields, the new styles, the County Fair.

"I don't know as I'll get there this year," she confided to a saucer; "August is a awful hard month." For nine years she had said the same thing. "Now that blue serge—I see skirts are a lot narrerer. I could turn it, and steam it so it would look just like new." Suddenly she sighed. "Mr. Sabin'll have to get a new cake of sandsoap, come Saturday. He thinks I use a sight of soap, but the water's hard." A new notion crept into her mind. She breathed quickly. "I've a good mind to say so next time. The water's hard, Mr. Sabin; that's why I got to use so much soap." She stared severely at the opposite wall, then dropped her head, her hands playing in the cooling greasy water. "No, I can't do that. He's a good man. He's been awful good to me. If he pays for things, he ought to say about them. I never had no time to earn money since he married me. If I had, I might have helped him out." With perfect honesty she pinned this fact upon herself.

The air was soon fragrant with spicy odors. A pie, a molasses cake, a tin of biscuits, cooking ham—she tended them all deftly, going rapidly from kitchen to pantry, to cellar, to woodshed. She cut the ham, sawing neatly through the bone. She seemed to know by instinct when the fire needed more wood. All her motions were quick, sure; there was no waste of energy, no useless movement.

She called the collie, and he came running to her from the fields. She watched with a growing light in her faded eyes. "Beats all how much he knows," she whispered softly. He bounded up to her and, standing on his hind legs, rested his forefeet upon her shoulders. His eager tongue found her neck, her cheek, ventured ever so little on her mouth. She laughed ashamedly, patting him with hands trembling with love.

"Good old doggy. There, go back now. Good old doggy."

She did not acknowledge, because it never occurred to her to do so, how dearly she loved the feeling of his wet tongue on her cheek, nor the warm glow which crept over her at his demonstrations of affection. She was not given to self-analysis in any form. She stood in the doorway, watching him as he ran across the plowed field, and suddenly, above her, a robin burst into song.

"Now, ain't that a pretty sound," said Mrs. Sabin. "I wonder what he's singing at. I always did want a canary. It would be a sight of company in the winter. But they cost a lot, and it might have died, and all that money wasted."

Back in the kitchen, she smoothed her soft white hair with a hand that trembled.

"I do wish he'd get something for this headache; seems as if sometimes I can't stand it."

She leaned against the wall.

"I hate to bother him, but if it don't stop I got to have something soon."

After a moment she felt better and went into their bedroom, off the kitchen. She handled sheets and spreads with unfeeling fingers. The bed had long ceased to interest her save as a refuge for aching body. Her best pair of sheets and her lace-edged pillowcases were packed away, had been packed away for years. If she had packed away her girlhood dreams, she had long since forgotten doing so. When she opened that box it was not to resurrect old happiness, it was to bleach the yellowing linen.

She punched and pummeled the feather bed into shape, the odor of barn and unclean human flesh rising to her unsmelling nostrils.

By nine o'clock she was out of doors, cutting asparagus or rhubarb, pumping the water, feeding the chickens. She

caught a fluffy yellow ball in her hands to look for lice. Once long ago she might have murmured foolish words to it, but that took time.

Mr. Sabin, moreover, was not given to sentiment. He had married her when she was very young, soon after his first wife died. She had often thought of that wife during her early wedded life, a little resentfully at first, that she might have taken the tenderness of love from him, and later a little wonderingly, that she too might have suffered. After a while she ceased to expect, to think. Work piled upon her, and she became too tired to care to wonder. Now she had no memory left even of these things. In her way she had found happiness. Trips to town. Baby things. New calico. The fashion sheets. The number of flowers on her cactus plant. Jars of packed butter. That time she prepared the parlor. Joy in her son, now grown so fine and big.

When Mr. Sabin came in at noon his dinner was ready for him. He hung up his hat on the nail, looked at his hands, poured a little water into the basin, dipped his fingers in it, and wiped off the dirt on the towel. He then sat down and helped himself plentifully to food.

After a while he spoke.

"Corn's showing," he said.

Mrs. Sabin brightened. "Now ain't that good—early start. Is they crows about?"

"They're coming fast. I used that tar, too; but they pull it whatever you do. I'll have to put up a line of papers, and we'll have to watch."

"Mebbe I can watch some, now I ain't got much to do while milk's low."

He did not answer.

They ate in silence until he said, "Sparegrass keeps good."

She nodded eagerly.

He spoke through food. "Mind you cut it under."

"I never cut a spear above since you showed me how."

He nodded approval, and she ate happily, sitting on the edge of her chair, ready to anticipate his needs.

"Pie good?"

"I'm eatin' it."

She cut a piece for herself, balancing it on two fingers.

"I put an egg in to thicken the juice," she told her husband.

After a while he was finished with food and pleased to become talkative: "One of the team's acting bad."

"My land! Which one?"

"The white."

"My land! That's the one you went and paid two hunderd dollars for, ain't it?"

A spasm crossed his face. "It is," said he.

"Is it very bad?"

"It don't act none too good."

"What you going to do about it if it don't get no better?"

"Send for Will, I guess."

A glow crept over her, for Will was her oldest and only living child. He was a veterinary—"horse doctor," his mother called it—and since his marriage to a stylish city girl had found little time to visit the farm. But he was "awful good" to her, and she loved him very dearly in her shy way. He sent her a box of candy each Christmas and Easter, and always renewed her magazine when it ran out.

Her eyes grew dim with longing.

Then a quick thought, born of pain, came to her.

"How you going to get Will out?"

"Jim can take the mare and go after him."

"Could he get something for my headache?"

"Aching again?"

"Something awful. Seems as if I can't stand it."

"You have a lot of headaches lately, seems to me."

"I know it. Sometimes I think it really never stops aching."

"That's too bad. Hurt you a lot?"

"Takes me sometimes in the back of the neck so I'm nigh crazy with the pain of it."

"Mebbe its a crick."

"Mebbe so." She was embarrassed but eager to tell. "My arms get sprickly and numb, too, like you could stick pins in and me not feel it."

"It do, hey?"

"Lots of times. But my head's the worse."

He picked his teeth meditatingly. "Now that's too bad. I'll tell Jim if he goes to step into the drug store and get something, and if he don't go I'll get it myself Saturday."

She got up from her chair, eager to show her gratitude.

She cleared off dishes and brought him his pipe to smoke, wiping a place clean on the white oilcloth. She brought out her heavy dishpan, walking around him so that he need not move. She was silent, waiting for him to speak, brimming over with sympathy, showing it in the only way she knew. If that horse died now . . .

She watched her husband as he smoked.

"It acts like it had colic, and then agin it don't. But I feel anxious, for I know it's sufferin'."

"The poor thing," said Mrs. Sabin.

"I've give him all I know what to," her husband told her, "to try and stop his pain, but it don't help much."

They were silent, until Jim came in smelling of the barn.

"The white's worse," he yelled.

"Oh, dear!" she cried.

"He's stampin' bad."

"Then he's in pain bad." Mr. Sabin had risen to his feet, all energy and briskness. "You go harness that mare right up and bring Will, and don't go slow, neither."

"But the pigs ain't fed yet."

From the doorway Mr. Sabin spoke to Mrs. Sabin, "You can tend to the pigs, can't you?"

"Right off," she answered him.

The men went quickly down the path, and she had a desire to call out to them not to forget her medicine, but the habits of a lifetime held, and she did not trouble them while they were busy. In spite of her morning mood of daring she did not bother them by reminding them of herself.

Her spirits were lagging now and her body tired. The new exhilaration of the forenoon had forsaken her, and she felt old and very, very weary. She was amazed that she should be so exhausted after a morning of easy hours, and wondered greatly at herself. She took the swill bucket to the pigs. She lifted the heavy pail and poured its contents into the trough. The pigs ate greedily with unlovely sounds, and she watched them while waiting for her breath to draw easier. "I never knew it to come so short," she thought. She seldom spoke aloud in the open air, for it seemed indelicate, bold; she needed the sanctuary of her kitchen to enclose her remarks.

Her kitchen was Parnassus in the waters that sought to drown her; she felt safe, secure within its four walls.

On her way to the house she stopped at the big barn, walking through the carriage house to the stall where the sick horse stood. Peering at it timidly, she saw that it was indeed a pretty sick animal. All her wicked feelings dropped from her like a mantle; her heart pounded; she wanted to do something right off, something to show how she felt. Suppose the horse died . . . suppose it died . . .

She wished she had done the washing, said to herself she would do it the first thing in the morning. She felt miserably guilty and unhappy and spoke low to Mr. Sabin in the stall with the horse.

"There ain't a crow in the fields. I looked as I came along."

"It's mostly mornings they bother." His eyes were on the horse, and it was wonderful to see him, so gentle, so worried, so untiring in his efforts. He even talked to it in a voice turned to low soft notes. He rubbed its poor belly and watched it with unabated zeal.

Mrs. Sabin took the bucket to the pump and rinsed it clean before returning it to the top step of the cellar stairs. She walked unsteadily, her free hand finding the back of her neck again and again. All the while her thoughts were with the sick horse, and in some unexplainable way it was all mixed up with herself, her evil thoughts. Suppose it died, would it be the seal of punishment upon her, that she had dared combat her life routine? Two hundred dollars . . . She looked at the wooden washtub, but her body refused the suggestion of her mind. Not to-day. Early to-morrow morning.

She shut up her chickens that she might be free to help if she were needed. She pumped fresh water, an extra supply, filled her teakettle, kept a good fire that there might be hot water on hand. She put her yeast to soak. Then she went back to her husband and his sick horse.

He looked up hopefully upon hearing her; then his expression changed.

"They ought to get here soon," she told him, understanding. He did not answer, nor did she expect him to. The horse was worse, and he was plainly worried. She watched the poor beast until her own legs grew suddenly weak beneath her and

she was forced to lean against the rough boards for support. A curious pallor overspread her face.

Mr. Sabin looked at her.

"It's worse. A darn sick horse. You fed the pigs?"

She nodded.

"To-night, give them that basket full of corn twice."

"All right." She grew brave. "Did you think to tell . . . ?" The white horse made a sudden attempt to bang its head against the wall, and she shrank back, her sentence uncompleted.

In all her life she had never suffered so much; her body was wet with the sweat of agony, and a fierce nausea was upon her. She wondered what kind of medicine they would send her, and if it would help her right off, and if the drug-store man would remember to tell Jim how much she should take . . .

She went to her kitchen and set about getting supper with dragging feet. She brought up eggs and milk and butter from the cellar, the heavy white dishes from the pantry. There would be two more for supper, and they would be hungry. She cut up potatoes, measured out coffee, that she might be prepared for a hurried meal.

At last the sound of wheels on the road reached her, and her pain was forgotten in the moment of greeting.

"The white horse is worse," she told her son, noting with shy tenderness his slick suit, his hat, his shiny shoes. She followed them to the barn and went with Jim to the mare's stall.

"Did you think to get the medicine at the drug store for my headache, Jim?" she asked, pain and eagerness in her voice.

He stared at her. "You never sent for no medicine by me Mis' Sabin," he said.

Mrs. Sabin walked back to the kitchen and cooked the supper. She hard-boiled eggs and fried potatoes and put the coffee on to boil. She mixed her sponge and set the covered bread pan in the pantry where it would not rise too quickly. She saw that her food was all on the table—bread, butter, cake, pickles, the jelly that Will loved—then she sat down.

She must have dozed, for quite without warning her son

stood beside her, laughing down at her; and she thought he looked very young and handsome. She suddenly realized how much she loved him and how like a stranger he had grown to be. He smiled at her stare.

"Ma, do my looks suit you? I think you're half asleep; and the white horse is worse. I want some hot water."

She was terribly ashamed, yet her feeling of shame was for someone very remote, very far away—herself, and yet not herself. She searched for words, and old familiar ones slipped out to her infinite relief.

"My—my land! That's too—too bad. Here's the teakettle, boiling full."

Her son took it and began teasing her good-naturedly and not unlovingly. "Ma, you're getting old. Falling asleep by the stove before supper time! You look sleepy, too."

She saw they were alone and whispered to him. "Will." She fought for words. "Will, you got anything you could give me for headache?"

"You women always having headaches." He looked at her closer. "You do seem sort of peaked, Ma; but I haven't a thing, only for horses. Maybe it's your stomach. Taken any baking soda?"

"Lots!" She leaned back wearily in her chair.

"Then try taking a dose of castor oil when you go to bed. Got to hurry now. Pa's pretty well upset."

Jim came in. "It's either better or worse, and he don't know which, and he says what are you waiting for?"

They hurried away, and Mrs. Sabin dozed again. She had a lovely dream. She walked in such a beautiful green field, and the flowers were so fragrant, and she had time to stoop and smell of them, and notice their beauty. And she had no feeling of weariness, no sense of being tired. She was full of happiness and joy and anticipation. Someone walked with her, someone who loved her very dearly. No words were spoken; but love was there, warming her, enfolding her, filling her with almost unbearable radiance. Like a sun that was too bright. She walked slowly, sensing that some miracle was about to happen. . . .

Jim stood in the doorway and was speaking. "It's better, Mis' Sabin, and he says for me to have my supper now, and then I can set with the white while they eat theirn."

With the dream upon her Mrs. Sabin dished up the meal, poured coffee, tried to talk. The pain in her head grew worse, and she became angry, suddenly very full of bitter thoughts.

"Don't no one care about my head?" she demanded. "Where's my headache medicine I sent for? Where is it?"

Jim peeled an egg and dipped it into the salt.

She realized in some way that she had not voiced the words, she had formed them in her mind but had not given them sound. She laughed, her anger leaving. "I might as well set again. This makes half a dozen times I have set this day." Jim said he'd thank her for a little more coffee. She poured it, steaming hot, fragrant, golden brown as the cream mixed.

He took a long swallow and spoke, chewing, "Sometimes a cup o'coffee'll help Annie's head wonderful."

She stood beside him, grateful that he remembered. Then suddenly she became greatly frightened. Never in all her life had she been through such a day. Had such wicked thoughts. Such funny dreams. Such awful pain. She was horribly afraid there was something all wrong. She spoke falteringly. "Does—does Annie have them bad?"

"Turrible. I never see the beat. Goes nigh crazy."

She felt immensely relieved, and said shyly, "I guess I been like her. I—I guess I was near crazy."

Jim ate placidly. "That's how she says it does to her."

Mrs. Sabin went back to her chair by the stove, dreadfully weak and shaky, but over her fright. Jim finished his supper and went out, and Mr. Sabin and his son came in for theirs. They were talking animatedly about the business on hand, Will declaring it to be the sickest horse he ever saw get well. They ate hungrily, Mrs. Sabin attending to their wants, cutting more bread, waiting upon them silently. Once she touched her son's brown hair softly, and he looked up at her with a smile. When they were satisfied she sat down in the chair by the stove and was very quiet. Mr. Sabin turned to her in surprise.

"Ain't you going to eat your supper?"

"I don't feel as if I could swallow a thing."

"Now, Ma, you try and eat. It might help your headache."

Mr. Sabin remembered. "There, now, if I didn't go and forget that medicine. Now, ain't that a shame." He spoke regretfully. "Ache bad?"

"Awful."

"Now, that's too bad. Will, can't you send back something by Jim to-night?"

"Sure I can. Rose has some pills that just hit the nail every time. Takes one every hour. But I'd say a dose of castor oil wouldn't hurt none. Her color's bad. You take a dose, Ma. I think it's just your stomach."

Mr. Sabin spoke more cheerily. "Now don't you worry about that horse, Ma. That horse is all right. You go to sleep and sleep that headache off. Did you give the pigs the corn?"

She concentrated, brow deep lined, "Let me think."

Mr. Sabin was mildly astonished.

"Don't you know as you did or not?"

Will answered for her. "We'll go feed the pigs, Pa. An extra meal won't hurt none. Her head is bad. Women are the darnedest for such things." He kissed his mother with gentle affection, his hand lingering on her shoulder.

Mr. Sabin looked at her and spoke clumsily. "Now, Ma, I feel awful not getting your medicine. I clean forgot it. That horse . . ."

She turned her face to him and smiled, and as she did so his huge bull-like head was thrust forward, and an alien look, something like a struggling baffled breath, passed over his face.

"Ma, you ought to speak up. You ought to say—you know now I feel awful. You never speak up." He paused, lost in his attempt.

Her own voice was eager as she answered him. "Why, Mr. Sabin," she said, "Mr. Sabin . . ."

For one second some tiny bit of something eternal passed between them—unrecognized and but dimly felt. Then Mr. Sabin lumbered to his feet, took his hat from off the nail, and went out of the door.

Mrs. Sabin got out her heavy dishpan, did her dishes, and put it up again. She did not talk to-night, and the room was very still. She felt a great, overwhelming sense of gratitude for all things—that she would soon be asleep, that Mr. Sabin was so sorry, that Will was such a good boy, that she was to have pills for the easing of her pain. She sat down for a moment to think it all over, her feet resting upon the hot hardness of the stove, and she dozed.

And found again the same pleasant place, the same fragrant flowers, the same enveloping love, the same freedom from weariness. "Mebbe it's one of my little dead babies growed up," she thought.

Sometime later Mr. Sabin and his son came to the doorway. "Ma's gone to bed," her son announced, after glancing into the room, "and that's the place for her. Her headache'll be gone by morning." He turned down the path. "Well," he yawned, "I'll be going, Pa. The horse ought to be pretty good to-morrow. But I'd go easy on the working of him, pain like that takes a horse's strength clean away. You better let him rest a while. He's a fine horse."

Mr. Sabin spoke feelingly. "That's dead right. It won't do him a mite of harm to lay off for a day or two. That team's been working hard now all spring. Yes, Will, I'll rest him up."

"Easy on the food."

"I know."

"Well, then good-night for now."

"Good-night."

He watched his son drive down the road, and thought proudly, "He's a good horse doctor. None better in these parts." He stood a second longer, considering the weather, then turned into the kitchen, thinking to have his customary nap before going to bed. He went to the chair by the stove, a yawn opening wide his mouth.

He stumbled against something.

Mrs. Sabin lay upon the floor. Very quiet, as was her way. Very quiet and silent and still. Her eyes stared up at him, her mouth seemed twisted and strange. He stooped and lifted her; lifted her and, suddenly, held her close to him. Dimly, haltingly, he bent his head and kissed her.

"Ma," he said, "Ma, do you hear me?"

THE SILVER SWORD

BY WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

FROM *Pictorial Review*

WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

was awarded in 1921 a special prize of $500 by the O. Henry Memorial Committee for general excellence in short stories for the years 1919, 1920 and 1921. In 1926 he was the winner of the O. Henry First Prize. He is the author of "Meat."

NEITHER side ever knew quite what happened. On the one, the defenders' side, there were seven, six yard servants of the plantation who were trying to get the coach team, the Vendee Grays, across Chapel Wood to a place where they could be hidden from the Yankees in Cottonmouth Swamp, "commanded" by Julius, the master's body servant, reaching home just then with the dead colonel's sword from the disaster in Virginia.

On the other side there must have been nearer seventy of "Sherman's Negroes," camp followers from Georgia, Ethiopians in an Ethiopian night. They were strangers in this low country, exalted for plunder, yet quick to halt and huddle at an uncomprehended sound.

The thing was a wailing. (It was the axle of the wagon that carried the fodder for the Grays.)

"Foh Gawd, whuh dat?"

Seventy of them halted sharply in a rocky ground.

The wail rose higher.

"Whah we-all to? Foh *Gawd!*"

What were these stones, lifted suddenly in the softness of a planted cedar wood? When they discovered that they were in a graveyard three or four of them let off their guns.

On their side, quite as startled, the yard servants loosed the shying Grays. There were but six of these matched white horses in the flesh, but in the twenty seconds that followed among the loud tombs of the Vendee dead there must have seemed a hundred of the pale beasts clattering.

Yells. Blind flight and broken shin bones. Shots into the air, into the ground. Brothers' fingers at brothers' throats, who could say? Devils ran in the shapes of tree trunks, cracking skulls. And presently, in deepening darkness, the quagmires of the Cottonmouth began to grab at knees.

That is the cold truth of the Battle of the Burying-ground.

There are not many places left where you can see ghosts in broad daylight, but for a long time there was one at Vendee,

in the sea-island littoral of South Carolina, the only big house left standing on the yellow banks of the Quashatoo.

You could see it on a fair day, about an hour before sunset, the likeness of a white old lady in an ash-gray gown, passing unhurried, glimpsed in sunlight, lost for a moment in the moss-bearded shadow, up the live-oak avenue. An eighth of a mile from the run-down lodge at the gate to the rain-washed, wind-dried portico of Vendee House, a good quarter of an hour would be consumed in the journey, with so serene a dignity this apparition walked. But if this passage was ghostly the ghostliest part of the business was not to commence until the lady had vanished into the shadows between the naked pillars of the mansion.

Presently, then, pair by pair, around and around the hollow shell, from story to story to the very dormers beyond the eaves, the glassless windows flapped their shutters, like so many wooden eyelids going soundlessly to sleep. It would be full dusk when, if you had waited, you would see the shade of Kit Lorilard recrossing the gaps in the leaf wall of the avenue, still contained, museful, erect, and unhurrying. *Like* a ghost, at any rate.

Kit Lorilard hated black and red. When a house is on fire among its trees at night those are the colors, bright red on blackness. One night in that February of 'sixty-five it was Ellen Wyant's house, Dorset, a tiny feather of crimson, repeated upside down on a bend of the black river beyond the rice dikes miles away. Another, it was Cousin Mary Mindal's, London House, its flame above the dark woods looking quite close in the window of the east chamber at Vendee, where Kit's son was being born.

It might have been Vendee itself that night, had it not been for the yard servants with the Grays across in Chapel Wood, and black Julius, who came in at midnight, white eyed with fright and triumph, mud caked and footsore from his two months' dodging down the Carolinas, bringing the mistress the master's sword.

Kit Lorilard was never quite like other women after that night. She mourned her husband, but others mourned theirs. She loved her son, but they too had sons. What set her apart was Vendee and the Battle of the Burying-ground.

The magnitude of that conflict could not but grow with the

growing years. Antietam and Gettysburg were famous engagements, it was true, but they had been far away; the Burying-ground lay just over there. Peyton, her husband, had fallen in the retreat on Richmond, but so had many another woman's husband; it had been the retreat of a whole people, after all. Not until the eleventh hour, among the gravestones around Vendee Chapel, seven against seventy (seven thousand against seventy thousand it came to stand in her imagination in the end), had that retreat been halted and the victory won.

Single handed, Vendee had fought General Sherman single handed, Vendee had whipped him and sent him packing North again. Twenty years, thirty years afterward, driving in, no matter how shabbily, to pay her calls on girlhood friends in Beaufort or Walterboro, the mistress of Vendee bore herself unconsciously with an air none of these others had. She was forever finding herself confused anew by the invidious bitter quality of their pride, so different from her own. Had she been of the kind to burst out, more than once she would have cried: "Why do you talk and act so? What if our gowns are years old and your houses gone and mine in want of painting? We whipped them soundly, didn't we, *in the end?*"

Vendee stood there to prove it. The stately beauty of the house never ceased to grow in Kit's eyes, until, by the time the last of its paint was gone and the rain free of a dozen gaps in the roofing, it had outgrown all the other houses of memory. Year by year the shell was emptied; stick by stick the irreplaceable furniture disappeared, to keep Kit's and her son's and grandson's soul and body together, and the taxes paid on the four thousand acres of salt-poisoned marsh, snake-ridden swamp, and undergrown woodland that the plantation came to be.

No matter. So long as the sword that had "commanded" at the Burying-ground rested on its pegs above the ballroom mantel, Vendee could never be anything but furnished and alive and going; and till Kit was in her eighties, no fine morning passed but she came up to open and air the great barrack from cellar to rafter, no evening but she locked it with an infinite care before returning, ghostwise, along the avenue to the lodge at the gate, where she and Peyton, her grandson,

lived meagerly, "for the time being," with the Negro tenant servant, Monday Sue. This Peyton, in his middle teens, Kit saw as the image of his father, the boy born to the ruffle of musket fire from the Burying-ground. He lived with an aura about him.

Heir to Vendee in turn now that his father was dead, Kit saw him singled out by that from among the young gentlemen of the low country. In learning, she could tell herself truthfully, he stood alone. No other in that corner of wilderness was so wise with an ailing hound as he; none knew so soon when the deer were shifting from rice land to pine land, or so unerringly where the biggest rockfish lay; and it took a Gullah black man of the full blood to smell a rattlesnake "walking" in the bush as quickly as young Peyton Lorilard could. To the fact that, never having been to school, he had had to get most of his learning from the Gullahs that scratched their weedy half acres in the neighborhood, she would, she could, and she must, close her eyes.

Still, sometimes, it gave the proud old gentlewoman a start.

"To whom, sir, are you addressing yourself?" she would demand then, her voice sharpening, as, for a wink, reality jostled her mind.

"Who Uh whut?" Her confusion was matched, and magnified, by his. "Who Uh duh talk tuh? Uh binna tell you 'bout d' moccasin snake en d' tettuh-fiel'. Uh yent shum till Uh——"

"Speak English, please, 'Uh yent shum,' your grandmother cannot understand. Say: 'I did not see it.' You're not talking with Negroes now."

But then, swift in defense, illusion reënwrapped her mind. "He *wasn't* talking to me. Monday Sue is busy behind me, and it was to her; one must talk Gullah to these servants or they will not understand."

Salkehatchee, Combahee, Quashatoo, Ashepoo, Edisto: these rivers are so tangled in the tide lands under the sea islands that it is hard to know where one begins and another ends. Once rice and indigo made them rich, and cotton richer. Now between the cypress swamps and the saltgrass marshes little is to be heard but the sound of wings. The slow beat of herons' flight. The drumfire of ducks from half a world drop-

ping down in the half lights to their fellows, or to the hunters' decoys.

Kit Lorilard had known a time when there were Yankee gunboats on these waters. Sometimes of a winter morning now (as she put back the ballroom shutters to let in the low sun), hearing the thud of guns faint in distance, she remembered. Then as she glanced at the sword hanging above the empty chimney place the width of the empty room away, a slight stricture that might have been a smile moved the muscles about her lips. Yankee gunboats, indeed!

It was toward sunset of a day in late December. Its engines at dead slow, the white sixty-footer nosed its way around a mud reef that once had been the corner of a rice field and stood in toward the shore, steep grown with cypresses backed by live-oaks, above which showed the chimneys and splintered cornices of a house.

Perry, the younger of the two boys from Connecticut, sounding, called the depths back to his brother at the wheel: "All right, plenty, Bat. As you go."

Their father had nothing to do but watch. At ease in a willow chair on the deckhouse, his greasy hunting coat open to this Southern air, his cap far back on his head, his eyes indulgent in the frames of their rubber-rimmed spectacles, Amos Cunningham Ring loafed at large in content.

He was lucky in those boys. "Yale and Tech," he meditated; "they ought to be proud of their work with these two kids. If they don't go far before they're through with it, these young 'uns, I'm no judge of the human race." Without raising himself the millman raised his voice: "There's help, Perry; somebody coming down the bank you can throw a line to. Somebody we know, too, by Jingo! Isn't it that young cracker we had around with us yesterday?" Perry turned sharply, his mouth in the lee of his corduroy collar.

"Jigger what you're hollering, Dad. *He's* no cracker. Get wise!"

"No? Well, if that boy's a mulatto, I admit I'm——"

"Shut up, Dad!" Now it was Bat, from the wheel. "Didn't you get it? When we were talking with him last night? He's a Lorilard, himself."

"Well, I'll be! What do you know about that?"

As soon as King got his khaki-wadded weight ashore he put out a hand.

"Well, well, sir; I didn't quite realize yesterday who it was we had with us. Entertaining angels unawares, eh? Well, well, well!"

He had to grin at the serious and equal way in which this lean, threadbare, dust-bitten country kid returned his handshake. "Good for you!" he thought. But when the stripling opened his mouth to speak the Northerner had to cover his startled amusement by paying attention to what his younger son was saying. "Yep," he made haste to nod and agree. "It would want only a little dredging, and we could put the pier right here."

Controlled, he returned to Peyton. "I hear you people have got a first-rate ruin hereabouts. These lads' mother is always at me to take an interest in ruins. So I suppose——"

The boy, confused, interrupted. "E no ruin. E Vendee House." When he had studied a moment a slight color dyed his temples. "Youn-all come along."

As they moved through the fringe of woods the Yankee spindle master weighed in speculation the three young figures ahead. Comparison, with the father, was inevitable; his two, and that one. And yet in the largeness of his good fortune he had something to spare for this backwoods urchin. "What a pity!" Out of protest grew indignation. "Good stuff. Good, basic, Anglo-Saxon timber! And to let it go to waste like this! It's a crime."

He ranged up with Peyton. "Look here, young man. Haven't you ever thought it would be a good idea to go to school—a good prep school, I mean?"

Peyton's eyes came around, wide blue.

"Oh, suh!"

"And then on to college? Engineering, perhaps, eh? How about it?"

"Oh, suh!" It was comical.

They walked on. But when they had come into the clearing where they could see a side of the gaunt house, and beyond it the hollow mound of the avenue running away, Peyton brought up short.

"Too bad, suh; house e lock' up. Dey my gran' go home now."

"Your what?"

"My gran'*mothuh*."

"I see. Yes, yes. So that's old—— Sonny, I'd like to meet your grandmother. Do you suppose?"

The sun had hardly gone down, but under the boughs a full dusk lay. At her grandson's hail Kit Lorilard had come to a stand by one of the oldest and most misshapen of the live-oak boles. Between its grayness and the grayness of the ribboning moss, what was gray of her was obliterated, leaving only the whiter loom of her face and hair to be seen with any certitude.

No wonder, for half a minute after the young marsh hopper had presented him, awkwardly, Ring felt a little weird. Peering, despite himself, from the distance of his bow, he cogitated: "Be darned if *I* sha'n't begin to believe in spooks if I stay around here much longer. Isn't she going to say a *word?*"

He had to begin it himself, speaking in a full, congenial tone:

"I'm particularly pleased to meet you, Mrs. Lorilard, because I believe I am acquainted with a relative of yours in Charleston. The same name, Lorilard, Augustus B. Am I mistaken?" In the moment he had to wait then, Ring felt himself growing smaller. "I—I was certainly led to believe, madam——"

"Mr. Augustus Lorilard is my kinsman by marriage." The voice from the live-oak was immaculate of inflection. "And my man of business."

"Correct!" Ring inclined his head. "Mrs. Lorilard, I'm very strongly interested in this part of the country. Perhaps it's because, as a boy, I was forever hearing my old dad go on about it; he was down through here with Sherman." The millman paused to chuckle. "I don't suppose, a few years back, I could have used that as a bid for popularity hereabouts. Thank God, though, bygones are bygones now: if the *Great* War has little else to its credit, it has that. We're all Americans again. That's something, isn't it, Mrs. Lorilard?"

Ring was not used to being asked to wait for an answer. It spoke well for his character that he was able to go on with every appearance of good humor.

"It's done stranger things than that, when you think of it. For one, it has made a Southerner of a bred-in-the-bone New Englander like me, and of a lot of others. They used

to talk of the trail of smoke Sherman left behind him. The other day, driving down through the Piedmont, I saw more Yankee smoke than Sherman ever dreamed of; forty-odd big plants, I counted, all full blast. Mine, Mrs. Lorilard, was one of them. I was among the first to see the writing on the wall. Last year we moved the Rhode Island Pequod Thread Mills down, lock, stock, and barrel; I bought a house in Columbia, and here I stand a citizen of South Carolina to-day. A real one, come to grow up with the land."

In the dusk Ring's face moved in an honest grin, then sobered again. "That brings me to the point of how I came in touch with Mr. Lorilard in Charleston, and how I come to be here. We have a home, I say, in Columbia, and now what we want next is a foothold down here at the water, a week-end place we can run away to. We've been scouting around for some time, the boys and I, and, although we've seen some properties that would do, it wasn't till we had paddled around and shot around this piece of yours that it came to us suddenly, all three of us: 'This is *it!*' And so, Mrs. Lorilard?"

There was an answer from over there this time, cool and colorless.

"I'm afraid I fail to comprehend. May I ask, sir, if anything my kinsman, Mr. Lorilard, has said to you has led you to believe——"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Lorilard, but that's what *I* want to know. I found it hard to pin Mr. Lorilard down. All I could gather definitely was that if you could get a price you would be a—be ill advised not to realize on your holding here as the market stands now. And the warning that I would probably find the figure pretty high."

"Very much too high, sir, I fear."

"As to that I could only tell him that I was used to saying yes or no. I'm not unaware of the prices the old estates are being held at up on the Cooper and the Santee. On the other hand, Lorilard was willing to admit that the acreage here was out of all proportion to your present needs, and the buildings—the old residence in particular——"

Far from having to await her words this time, they came with the interrupting quality of an unexpected blade.

"You are fully aware, then, of the condition of Vendee House as it stands to-day?"

"Surely, I haven't come here, madam, without a pretty clear idea——"

"I'm glad of that, Mr. Ring. 'Ring' was the name, was it not?" It was hardly the voice of the same woman; where it had been lifeless, now it quickened. "Understand then, sir, if you were to offer me *one hundred thousand dollars* for Vendee as it stands to-day——"

"A hundred. Mmmm. Mrs. Lorilard, that's a good deal of money. Still!"

The spindle master chuckled, in the way a man will say, "So that's that." He eased his shoulders, loosened his arms. "Well, boys, what do we say?" He included Peyton, clapping a hand on the bewildered stripling's shoulder. "And what do you say, sir? What about that prep school *now?* What about that college? A little something invested in the head to go up against this cold proposition the modern world is—eh?"

The boy's was not the only bewilderment.

"Wait!" But there was more than bewilderment in that syllable from across the road; there was something curiously like dismay. "I'm sure you must have misunderstood me. I said one hundred *thousand* dollars. In cash. In gold. In the bank to-morrow morning."

"Surely. Nothing could suit better. The kids must be back at their grind in eleven days now, and I at mine, so naturally we couldn't get in and at it too soon for *us*. So if we could go up in the morning to Charleston, first thing, all of us, and get together with Mr. Lorilard——"

Ring's words broke off and his jaw dropped. It was almost full dark in the leafy tunnel now. When he had blinked his eyes to make sure of the eery evidence he appealed to Peyton.

"I didn't see your grandmother go, but it looks as though she were gone, doesn't it? If she didn't understand about to-morrow morning, please explain it to her."

What a night! The old woman wouldn't go to bed. She was frightened.

"One hundred thousand dollars!"

She had meant it as a crusher. She, who in half a century of wilderness and want had almost forgotten what twenty dollars could feel like in the hand, had dealt it as a blow. The

only reason she hadn't made it a million was that the other had more syllables.

There's a nightmare in which you try to defend yourself against vermin with a club ten times as big as there's any need. And, lo, as you swing it for murder, it bends like putty; strike again, wildly, and it twists a very rope of water in your hands. Terrified, as soon as you can you wake up.

Kit Lorilard had wakened. Heretofore she had always been able to get back quickly again into the world of her illusion. To-night reality had jostled her too roughly (and too mockingly); her eyes were open too wide.

She had been living here in the lodge for upward of a decade, and not till now had she ever looked about her to see where she and Peyton were. Now that she did look, what had become of Kit Lorilard, high-headed chatelaine of arrogant Vendee? All she saw was an old woman; yes, an old, old woman, wrapped like a crone for warmth in a torn bed-quilt, in a wired deal chair, before a rag of fire in a clay chimney, feet on a box to keep them off the ground.

"One hundred thousand dollars!" The wind rustled in the trees outside. In a neighboring room Monday Sue was snoring, warm in her own fat. Over and over and over. "One hundred thousand dollars!" The little fire made big shadows, trying its best to furnish the drafty kennel once again with big mahogany and soft hangings, and put a cricket on the hearth. But to-night the shadows were transparent, and the cricket was only a cockroach, three-quarters torpid, writing with its creepers in the wintry dust. "One hundred thousand dollars! In cash!"

Peyton, the boy, was restless. Time after time, when Kit, mistaking the wind in the palmettos for the sigh of a second sleeper, hoped that at last he had settled down, there his feet came, soft as a scout's on the earth, and his shadow, interrogating, across the other shadows on the wall. His eyes were wide with a fever of their own, and his voice sounded troubled.

"Gran', younah wake yet? Pas' middle night; moh bettah younah go bed."

That made her flinch.

"Stop it, sir. You know you can speak proper English if you'll but take the trouble to recollect to whom——" But then, trapped in reality beyond escape this time, she knew he

couldn't, no matter what trouble he took. With that, at last, she had to look at him squarely and see him as he was. And seeing him, abruptly, vividly, and pitilessly, she saw his father before him, her son, a weed sprung in a thinning ground, a "gentleman" with the manners of an island cracker, a "scholar" with hardly more than a possum hunter's words at his command, dying at last with as little apparent reason as he had lived, a dust-colored, soon-forgotten, old-young man.

And now she saw another father and other sons, as she had seen them but hours since standing before her under the oaks of the avenue, the two boys full of meat and laughter, the man formidable, fortunate, and obtuse. That father, whose father had marched with Sherman, laying the hand of patronage on the shoulder of a Peyton Lorilard of Vendee. "What about that prep school *now?* That college? A little something invested in the head——"

She saw them all for an instant against a red background black with the advancing towers of Northern smoke.

"This is *it!*" they had said. Now she heard them: "This is the house. And here we are, come back for it."

Peyton, the boy, turned the log in the chimney to start a blaze.

"Now, Gran', sukkah late e is, younah go bed."

There was a loving gentleness in it that brought her up in her chair.

"Stop it!" It was her way of crying: "Get thee behind me, Satan!" But then she softened her voice. "You go to bed yourself, poor boy. I'm all right; don't worry about me. Peyton dear, please."

But before he was out of the room she was up looking after him.

"Peyton."

"Suh?"

"Peyton. That—that the Yankee was saying—about school —college—would it mean a very great deal to you? Peyton, say."

The boy was funny. He looked cornered. He grew red and began to scowl.

"Wuh me fuh do wid schoolin', Gran'? Uh knows ebruhting, enty?"

There it was, the full blow, squarely between Kit's opened eyes. And now, between two winks, a thing that would have been incredible for more than fifty years had become inevitable. As surely as Vendee House stood there in the morning, and as surely as that Yankee fool in his folly came back asking——

As soon as the boy was safely gone panic began to chase the old woman around the room. Shuffling. The place had grown a trap, and she had to escape it. Opening the door with the care of fright, she stood out in the air.

The chill little wind of the Carolina night ran glassy clear, making the stars shiver. In the black mouth of the avenue it made the moss veils wave, confused, like weed streamers on the floor of an ocean upside down. Alive and menacing. In her imagination, as though they knew her for a renegade so soon, she heard them whispering: "Don't try to go up there, old woman; don't try to go through here." Then Kit knew that that was the thing she must do.

"But I have no light, and the house is pitch dark," she vacillated.

As simply as that, duplicity began; as shrewdly, mutiny laid its train.

"If you had matches with you, old woman——"

"But there's no lamp up there."

"Ah, but there is. In the serving pantry. Remember?"

"There's no oil in it."

"The oil can is under the table in Monday Sue's room, and since you're going back for matches anyway——"

As Kit went along the avenue, where for half a century a spirit in the likeness of a lady in gray had walked, continent and unhurrying, she hurried crabwise, her body askew with the weight of the oil can, to keep it clear of her skirts.

She tried to pin her mind: "In cash, Peyton. It will be enough, and more than enough."

But if only she could get along faster, to keep ahead of what was at her heels. For now that she had dared break with her stubborn dream and rub her eyes and look she saw the years of her age catching up with her flesh, one by one, ten by ten.

She kept on trying to pin her mind: "In gold, Peyton. . . . In the bank, my boy, in the morning. . . . A whole roof.

. . . Charleston. . . . Decent clothes. . . . School. . . . Books. . . . Music. . . . Gentlemen's sons. . . . Gentlemen's daughters. . . . Lights. . . . Better lights than shanty fires. . . . A pew in St. Michael's. . . . A fair start in a new world, poor Peyton, poor boy. . . ."

But when she had come to where she could see the house's pillars dim in the starlight at the tunnel's end, another voice got in, sly as mocking.

"Why hurry so, Kit? Why not catch a moment's breath here? Why so fearful of this gap, just here, in the wall of the trees?"

Kit was winded. When she stopped her joints cracked with aching. When she looked out through that gap she saw, no higher than a rice dike across the marsh, the wall of the wood that covered the Burying-ground.

Now a pendulum swung. Despite her will her mind ran away into memory.

She lay in childbed. No doctor was there; only Mauma Linda, the plantation midwife. Framed in the east window, London House was burning. Through the north window came a sound of guns from Chapel Wood.

Pain had her. A breath took a minute; minutes had the weight of hours.

"Hark again, Linda. Are they louder now?"

"Oh, muh Gawd, muh Gawd, Missie! dey shuah moh louadh. Yeddy un shoot dey guns. Oh, muh Jedus, who-all duh able stop dey Yankees fum come en dead my Missie en we-all, en bu'n de big house down?"

"Burn *this* house, Linda? Don't be insane! Burn *Vendee?*"

Sweat pouring down from the eyebrows into the eyes, big cold rivers.

A cry out of an open throat. "I must stop them. Quick, Linda! Help! Can't you see you must help me, you fool? *Bear my baby quickly, and let me go!*"

Blackness—and Kit was let go.

Blackness striped with fire, vein on vein, rank after crackling musket rank, Sherman's batteries wheel to wheel along the sylvan parapet of the Burying-ground, reaping the low country with a metal wind. And Kit and her husband, who had come white bodied from somewhere, stood side by side in that wind; stood with their arms spread out against it.

It blew on through them. It tore their flesh to ribbons, and the ribbons to threads, ten thousand irons of pain. Ten more thousands. Ten more. With a rushing and a whistling, all the murdering weight of the invaders' wonder and spleen.

And still they stood, mistress and master, their riddled arms spread out across the way of an army in the night of hell. Till nothing was left unriddled but her lips. Kit's lips kept on saying: "We'll not fall, Peyton." And still Peyton answered: "We'll not fall."

So, little by little, the weight began to lessen. One by one the veins of flame were emptied. The wind died. All was still.

"We've stood and we've broken them, Peyton. They're gone, and they'll never come back again."

No answer.

"Peyton!"

Her arms still out across the house, Kit turned her head to look for him. Light struck slowly into her eyes. A weak flare of candles in a room where she lay on a bed. Two Negroes were bending over her. One was Mauma Linda, with a bundle in her arms. The other was Julius, Peyton's body servant, whom she had not seen for months. His clothes were muddy, his eyes white with a scared triumph; in his fists he gripped his master's sword.

The old woman found herself shaking with the cold like so many bones tied loosely together. Like rattling bones words echoed through her brain:

"... My father was down through here with Sherman.... It came to us: 'This is *it!*' ..."

The bones of her knuckles Kit rubbed in her eyes. What was she thinking?

"... So, naturally, we can't get in too soon for *us*...."

"In where? Into Vendee? You Yankees?"

"... go up in the morning ... get together with Mr. Lorilard..."

"Never!"

"Ah, but you will, you know. There's Peyton, poor boy. In daylight it will look different again. You know, yourself, as surely as that house——"

"No, no, no, no!"

Where could she look for help if she couldn't look to her own two hands? One of them she discovered full of matches,

the other numb with the weight of a gallon of kerosene. Now they began to mock her with voices.

"You know it's true. An iron wind is one thing to stand against; a wind of gold is quite another. As surely as that Yank comes back with his hundred thousand——"

"You lie!" She tried to throw the matches away, but they stuck between her fingers.

"And as surely as ever that house is standing there when he comes——"

She shook the oil can, but that only filled it with a clucking mirth.

"What did you bring me for? To fill a lamp? *To fill a lamp?*"

The most monstrous part of it was that for what seemed hours nobody saw it, nobody knew, nobody came. Towering bright in a hundred miles of blackness; roaring skyward in the center of silence. Nobody shouted; nobody came.

Even when it did begin, the awakening seemed intolerably gradual. Down river a cabin bed creaking. "Wuh dat light sukkah red lukkah fiah?" Up river a cabin door flung back. "Jedus! *Fiah!*" A telephone shrilling, half a parish away. On the hard roads, the slap-slap of bare feet, wooden ringing of hoofs. Presently, as the east lightened toward day, sirens of engines.

It was nearly sunup when Perry Ring put his head out of the companionway of the sixty-footer where she lay at anchor across the river.

"What's all the smoke about?" Realizing then: "Hey, you, below—Dad, wake up—see what's happened to your ruin. Gone up in smoke."

When the three got ashore they found half the population of the parish around the black foundations, from which strings of smudge still arose. On one side only, the front, toward the heat-shriveled mound of the avenue, did they keep a distance and leave a space. Kit Lorilard sat there, not on rock or stump, but on the ground. Though her grandson, long chinned and saucer eyed, tried from time to time to arouse her, she continued in a kind of catalepsy, her eyes fastened stupidly on the emptiness where Vendee House had been, her tight arms pressing against her breast a silver-mounted sword.

The millman's first thought was a logical one. It was more than logical; in a man who had spent a lifetime in making a business pay it was instinctive. "How much will this knock off the price?" It is by so much more to his credit then, that, moved by the tragic import of that figure of the watcher quiet in the dawn, his second thought should be: "What the devil. Poor old thing! Play it square."

Leaving his sons in the crowd, he walked out to her.

"Mrs. Lorilard, this is terrible. I'm very sorry." He bent slightly and took pains with his words, as if to a deaf person. "I realize what this disaster must mean to you in a sentimental way. Not only your old home gone, but all the things, with all their associations, that must have been in it—for I see that you could save practically nothing—only one sword."

As yesterday, again to-day he had to wait. Again he had to carry on.

"I hope you will forgive me, madam. I realize it's hardly the moment for an outsider to be intruding with his own affairs. So you have only to say the word; if you'd rather wait till to-morrow or another day—or if Mr. Augustus Lorilard might have the authority to act for you in arranging the transfer and banking the hundred thousand——"

That reached Kit.

"What?"

The head lopped back on a neck that had grown of a sudden an Adam's apple.

Reading the bewilderment in the watery eyes, Ring made to withdraw.

"I see. After all, it's hardly the moment——"

"I should have thought even a Yankee would have known it was hardly the moment for mockery, sir."

"For—*mockery!*"

Poor Kit, broken by terror and remorse, hopeless, helpless, distracted, his sincerity left her nothing to believe. She stared back at the ruin.

"But—but it's gone. Isn't it?"

"What's gone? Nothing but that one old shell. It's just as well; saves us the cost of clearing. We're planning the pier here, and this is the logical place for the camp. A log one, with ten-foot fireplaces."

"I don't understand. Vendee is a waste place now."

"Why, of course. That's why we like it. I'm not buying antiques, madam; I'm buying a preserve to shoot over, for me and my boys and their friends from the North. The less there is on it, the wilder to waste it runs, the more it's worth to us——"

"To you Yankees."

Kit was on her feet. Ring laughed, a hint ill at his ease. "Pshaw, Mrs. Lorilard!"

Eyes hard, the sword of the Burying-ground across her breast, Kit faced him to defy him. But then, beyond him, her gaze encountered the boy, Peyton, who hovered and watched and listened and held his breath.

"Oh!" she muttered. "You!"

It was then that she began to laugh. Bending suddenly and deeply before the spindle master, "For pity's sake, take it, then," she said, "and give us peace."

"What's all this?" Ribbing his brow, Ring studied down at the burden left in his two hands, the black-scabbarded, silver-mounted sword. "Does this go with the place?" But Kit Lorilard was looking the other way, to the north, her shoulders quivering to the cackle of her clear and bitter mirth.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

THE LISTS

Before consulting the appended lists, please note the following abbreviations:

A. A.	*Argosy Allstory Magazine*
Ac.	*Action Stories*
Ace	*Ace-High Stories*
Ad.	*Adventure*
Am.	*American Magazine*
Am. B.	*American Boy*
Am. G.	*American Girl*
Am. H.	*American Hebrew Magazine*
Am. Merc.	*American Mercury*
Ar.	*Archive*
Atl.	*Atlantic Monthly*
B. B.	*Blue Book Magazine*
B. M.	*Black Mask*
Book.	*Bookman*
Brief S.	*Brief Stories*
C.	*Century Magazine*
C. G.	*Country Gentleman*
C. H.	*College Humor*
C. L.	*College Life*
C. T.	*Chicago Tribune*
C. W.	*Catholic World*
Clues	*Clues Magazine*
Col.	*Collier's Weekly*
Cow.	*Cowboy Stories*
D.	*Delineator*
D. F.	*Detective Fiction*
D. S. M.	*Detective Stories Magazine*
Elks	*Elks Magazine*
Ev.	*Everybody's Magazine*

F.	*Forum*
F. B. S.	*Fawcett's Battle Stories*
F. S.	*Flying Stories*
Fr.	*Frontier*
G. H.	*Good Housekeeping*
H.	*Harper's Magazine*
H. B.	*Harper's Bazar*
H. F.	*Hebrew Forum*
H. I. & C.	*Hearst's International and Cosmopolitan Magazine*
Hol.	*Holland's*
J. F.	*Jewish Forum*
L.	*Liberty*
L. H. J.	*Ladies' Home Journal*
McCall	*McCall's Magazine*
McClure	*New McClure's Magazine* (Combined with *Smart Set*, March, 1929,)
Men.	*Menorah Journal*
Mun.	*Munsey's Magazine*
Mys.	*Mystery Stories*
N. A.	*New Age*
N. A. R.	*North American Review*
N. W.	*North West Stories*
Op.	*Opportunity*
P.	*People's Home Journal*
P. R.	*Pictorial Review*
P. S. M.	*Prize Story Magazine*
P. T.	*Plain Talk*
Pop.	*Popular*
Pr. S.	*Prairie Schooner*
R.	*Romance* (Combined with *Everybody's*, April, 1929)
R. B.	*Red Book Magazine*
R. B. S.	*Red-Blooded Stories*
R. D. T.	*Real Detective Tales*
S. E. P.	*Saturday Evening Post*
S. E. Q.	*Saturday Evening Quill*
S. F.	*Successful Farming*
S. S.	*Short Stories*
Scr.	*Scribner's Magazine*
Sea	*Sea Stories*
Smart Set	*Smart Set Magazine*
T.	*Top-Notch Magazine*

T. S.	*Three Star Magazine*
V. Q. R.	*Virginia Quarterly Review*
W.	*World Magazine*
War	*War Stories*
W. H. C.	*Woman's Home Companion*
W. S.	*Western Story*
W. T.	*Weird Tales*
Westm.	*Westminster Gazette*
Y.	*Young's Magazine*
Y. C.	*The Youth's Companion*

LIST I

Stories ranking highest:

Aiken, Conrad, The Fishing Supper (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Anderson, Sherwood, Beauty (*H. B.*, Jan.).
Beer, Thomas, Americanus Sum (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 17); Love (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 15); Honor (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); Faith (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 6).
Bellah, James Warner, The Aftermath (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 27); Upwood Bobie, Adventurer (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 22).
Benefield, Barry, There Was a Little Boy (*W. H. C.*, Apr.).
Benét, Stephen Vincent, Candleshine (*R. B.*, Sept.); The King of the Cats (*H. B.*, Feb.).
Bercovici, Konrad, Luca (*McCall*, Oct.).
Bradley, Mary Hastings, The Custom of His Country (*R. B.*, Oct.).
Brady, Mariel, With Patrick Henry's Aid (*G. H.*, Nov.)
Brennan, Frederick Hazlitt, Total Disability (*L.*, Oct. 20); The Terror (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 6); Pieface and the Poet Maid (*R. B.*, June); One Night at Susie's (*L.*, June 22).
Bromfield, Louis, The Skeleton at the Feast (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.).
Brooks, George S., The Material Witness (*McClure*, Mch.); Cassidy's Road to Rome (*Scr.*, May).
Brush, Katharine, Speakeasy (*C. H.*, Feb.).
Butler, Ellis Parker, The Gnat (*Am.*, Feb.); The Valleyshannons (*W. H. C.*, July).
Carrington, Elaine Sterne, Neighbors (*P. R.*, Nov.).
Cather, Willa, Double Birthday (*F.*, Feb.)
Chapman, Maristan, Treat You Clever (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30).
Cobb, Irvin S., One of the 30 (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, Ball One—Strike One (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15); As the Twig is Bent (*Am.*, Nov.).

Condon, Frank, Trip Number Ten (*Col.*, Apr. 13).
Connell, Richard, Material (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 24); All in the Day's Work (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Connolly, James B., Lord John Rolls In (*McClure*, Sept.).
Cross, Ruth, A Substitute for Golf (*L.*, Oct. 6).
Davis, H. L., Old Man Isbell's Wife (*Am. Merc.*, Feb.).
Delmar, Viña, Uptown Sheik (*R. B.*, Oct.); St. Louis Blues (*R. B.*, July).
De Voto, Bernard, Afternoon of a Biologist (*H.*, Sept.); The College Angel (*R. B.*, Dec.).
Duranty, Walter, The Miracle (*R. B.*, May,.
Edson, Charles, The Iron Mother (*P. R.*, Feb.).
England, George Allan, Bananas (*B. B.*, Feb.).
Erskine, John, Minor Poetry (*H. I. and C.*, Dec.).
Fitzgerald, Edith, Curtain! (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 9); Miss Brooklyn and Queens (*S. E. P.*, June 15).
Follett, Wilson, Oak (*C.*, Jan.).
Glass, Montague, One Acrobat too Many (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
Green, Walton, He Was One of the Boston Bullertons (*McClure*, Dec.).
Hergesheimer, Joseph, The Air is Not Thin (*S. E. P.*, May 25).
Howard, Sidney, The Homesick Ladies (*Scr.*, Apr.).
Hughes, Rupert, Naked Truth (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Huston, McCready, The Dower Chest (*Scr.*, Sept.).
Jackson, Margaret Weymouth, One Round Trip Ticket (*W. H. C.*, June).
Jerard, Elise Jean, The Second Egg (*F.*, Oct.).
Johnson, Nunnally, New York—My Mammy! (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8); Good Old Uncle Homer (*McCall* Nov.); Not If You Gave It to Me! (*S. E. P.*, May 11).
Johnston, Mary, Elephants through the Country (*V. Q. R.*, Jan.).
Kelland, Clarence Budington, Comedy (*Col.*, Sept. 15); The Taut String (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 23).
Kerr, Sophie, Cedars Must Have the Wind (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).
Kyne, Peter B., Chivalry (*Col.*, Sept. 1).
Lane, Rose Wilder, Harvest (*H.*, Jan.).
Lardner, Ring W., Dinner (*H. B.*, Sept.); Ex-Parte (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Contract (*H. B.*, Mch.).
Leech, Margaret, Manicure (*H.*, Oct.).
Longstreth, T. Morris, Belief (*C. G.*, Dec.).
McKenna, Edward L., Emergency Call (*Col.*, Apr. 6).

Marquand, John P., Mr. Goof (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Marquis, Don, The Strong Woman (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15); Two Red-haired Women (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 8); A Spinster of the Old School (*S. E. P.*, July 6).
Mercein, Eleanor, The Etcheonda (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 2).
Montague, Margaret Prescott, Pretty Gal (*P. R.*, Feb.).
Mumford, Ethel Watts, Off-Color Whitemail (*P. R.*, Oct.).
Myers, Elaine A., Marise Parlant (*C. W.*, Mch.).
Nafziger, Ray, Way for a Cowboy! (*Cow.*, Sec. Nov. No.).
Nason, Leonard H., Old Soldier (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 6); The Chinless Man (*S. E. P.*, June 8).
Norris, Kathleen, Sinners (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Parker, Dorothy, Big Blonde (*Book.*, Feb.).
Parmenter, Christine Whiting, Out of the Air (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Patterson, Norma, Un Soldat (*G. H.*, Feb.).
Patterson, Pernet, Buttin' Blood (*Atl.*, Sept.).
Peattie, Donald and Louise, The Resistant Strain (*N. A. R.*, Feb.)
Portor, Laura Spencer, The Mouse (*H.*, Nov.).
Post, Melville Davisson, Dead Men's Shoes (*Am.*, June).
Roche, Arthur Somers, Put Him on a Spot (*Col.*, July 6).
Rushfeldt, Elise, A. Coffin for Anna (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Samson, Erin, Dear Jester (*C. W.*, Sept.).
Sanborn, Ruth Burr, Professional Pride (*L. H. J.*, Feb.).
Seifert, Shirley, The Hero of Twin Pines (*W. H. C.*, Oct.).
Singmaster, Elsie, A Friend (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13); The Good Witch (*Col.*, Oct. 27); The Golden Rug (*W. H. C.*, Jan.); Wings (*P. R.*, Feb.); A Special Providence (*Col.*, Apr. 13).
Slade, Caroline, Mrs. Sabin (*P. T.*, June).
Squier, Emma-Lindsay, Caballo de Flores (*G. H.*, Mch.)
Stait, Virginia, In India Ink (*Ar.*, Nov.).
Stark, Jean, Clouded Ivory (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Steele, Wilbur Daniel, From One Generation to Another (*P. R.*, Oct.); The Silver Sword (*P. R.*, Mch.); Pioneers (*H.*, July).
Tarkington, Booth, Muskickadee (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12); Importance at the Neck (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 9); The Neck, and Bush Thring (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 23).
Tarleton, Fiswoode, Meddlesome (*P. T.*, Nov.); Skin for Skin (*C.*, July).
Terhune, Albert Payson, The Whisperer (*R. B.*, Oct.); Lad and Lohengrin (*R. B.*, June).
Towne, Charles Hanson, Much Adieu about Nothing (*H. B.*, Apr.).

Upson, Willam Hazlett, Rest and Recreation (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 23); The Old Home Town (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 9).
Wharton, Edith, Dieu d'Amour (*L. H. J.*, Oct.).
White, Stewart Edward, Tingra's Ghost Story (*S. E. P.*, June 29).
Whitman, Stephen French, The Perfect Hostess (*R. and Ev.*, July).
Wholey, Alice, A Mother of Americans (*Col.*, Oct. 20).
Williams, Ben Ames, The Mystery of the Swaggering Man (*R. B.*, Feb.).
Wood, Frances Gilchrist, Butterfly Dust (*D.*, Jan.).

LIST II

Stories ranking second:

Abbott, Eleanor Hallowell, "Old Men Sitting in the Sun" (*Am.*, Sept.); Thinking of My Soldier (*W. H. C.*, Nov.); Two Wives and Three Husbands (*W. H. C.*, May).
Adams, Bill, Sea Baptism (*Ad.*, Dec. 1); Old Frosty (*Sea*, Jan.); An Eye for an Eye (*Ad.*, Feb. 1); The Last of the Horns (*Ad.*, Apr. 15); The Skipper's Sister (*R. and Ev.*, July).
Adams, Eustace L., On the Other Side of the Lines (*A. A.*, Nov. 17).
Adams, Frank R., "All Right, Let's Try" (*L.*, Sept. 1); Women Think Faster (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Adams, Samuel Hopkins, Swim, Roman, Swim (*C. T.*, Sept. 16).
Addington, Sarah, Little Frog, Big Puddle (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).
Akers, Arthur K., Powder Costs Money (*R. B.*, July.)
Aley, Maxwell, Lilies (*Col.*, May 18); Secret Sins of Mr. Pitt (*P. R.*, July).
Anderson, Frederick Irving, Beyond All Conjecture (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29); Vivace—Ma non Troppo (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 16); Gulf Stream Green (*S. E. P.*, June 15.)
Angell, Pauline K., 'Mid Pleasures and Palaces (*P. R.*, Feb.); Turn About (*McCall*, Apr.).
Annixter, Paul, Above Timberline (*S. F.*, Feb.)
Antopolska, Servia, The Tide (*W.*, Dec. 2).
Armstrong, John, Grande Dame (*Am. Merc.*, Feb.).
Atkinson, Owen, The Singing Grenadier (*War*, Nov. 22); "Who's Got the Button?" (*War*, Feb. 28).
Atlee, Benge, Nothing is Final (*Ev. and R., June*).¶
Augsberg, Paul Deresco, The Sport of Kings (*P. S. M.*, Oct.); Sweet Rosie O'Grady (*Col.*, July 20).
Avery, Stephen Morehouse, Two of a Kind (*Col.*, Oct. 20); The

Turn of a Card (*Col.*, Feb. 2); The Age of Indiscretion (*Col.*, Feb. 9).

Bacon, Josephine Daskam, The Heartless Imp (*C.*, Mch.)

Bankson, Russell Arden, Desert Wings (*S. S.*, Nov. 10).

Banning, Margaret Culkin, Open House (*C. H.*, Sept.); We Can't Afford It (*L. H. J.*, Oct.); The Wedding March (*L. H. J.*, Nov.); In Line for Something (*H.*, May); Night Letter (*S. E. P.*, June 15).

Bari, Valeska, The Eyes of Loaiza (*C. W.*, Sept.).

Barker, Elsa, Game (*C.*, Oct.).

Barker, S. Omar, Honor among Bulldoggers (*Cow.*, Sec. Oct. No.); What Price Friendship? (*B. M.*, Mch.).

Barnard, Leslie Gordon, Marching Feet (*F.*, Nov.).

Barnes, Margaret Ayer, Feather Beds (*P. R.*, Sept.); Perpetual Care (*P. R.*, Oct.).

Beach, Rex, The Lie Doctor (*L.*, Feb. 9).

Beale, Will, The Gringo Matador (*Pop.*, First Feb. No.).

Beard, Wolcott LeClear, Vampiro (*Mys.*, Oct.)

Bellah, James Warner, The Jolly Old High Seize (*Col.*, Sept. 8); "Panama—3000 Miles Away" (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15); The Shark (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 3); Jonah (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10); The Tuber (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 24).

Benefield, Barry, Coming Home (*Col.*, Nov. 10); The Law is a Jealous Mistress (*W. H. C.*, Dec.); Song in the Dark (*L.*, Mch. 2).

Benét, Laura, Goods and Chattels (*F.*, Dec.).

Benét, Stephen Vincent, The Story about the Ant-Eater (*C.*, Oct.); Fiona and the Unknown Santa Claus (*L. H. J.*, Oct.); Blossom and Fruit (*H.*, Nov.).

Bennaure, Adolph, Blazing Luck (*W. S.*, Feb. 16).

Bennett, James W., The Mixed Court Decides (*S. E. P.*, June 29).

Bennett, James W., and Kwen-Ling, Soong, The Obliterated Buddha (*Ad.*, May 1); The Mercy of Kuan Yin (*Ad.*, May 15).

Bercovici, Konrad, "There's Money in Poetry" (*H.*, Oct.); Black Soil (*D.*, Feb.).

Bethel, Capt. W. R., Heritage of the Sea (*A. A.*, Mch. 2).

Bliss, Tip, The Calamity Gang (*War*, Jan. 17).

Blochman, L. G., The Minamoto Pearl (*Ev.*, Mch.).

Blodgett, Ruth, Saturday—Night Beans (*Scr.*, July).

Borland, Hal, Silver Dawn (*C. T.*, Mch. 24).

Boyd, Thomas, When a Princess Commands (*Scr.*, Sept.); Argonne (*C. G.*, Nov.); One Hour to Go (*C. T.*, Nov. 11).

Brackett, Charles, Ever Bright and Fair (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13); Stormy Passage (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 27); Mrs. Eldridge (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 23); The Black Monocle (*W. H. C.*, June).

Bradford, Roark, Other Men's Poison (*Col.*, Dec. 15); The Final Run of Hopper Joe Wiley (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); The Gree Gree Girl (*Col.*, Jan. 12); The Somebody Man (*Col.*, Apr. 27); Fast Company (*Col.*, July 6).

Bradley, Mary Hastings, With Clean Hands (*R. B.*, Nov.); Drums in the Dark (*R. B.*, Feb.); The Poachers (*R. B.*, May).

Brainerd, Eleanor Hoyt, The Disappearance of Mrs. Jennings (*L.*, Sept. 22).

Brennan, Frederick Hazlitt, Incorrigible (*L.*, Sept. 8); Soulful Southworth (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22); The Waxen Saint (*L.*, Nov. 10); The Flirt (*R. B.*, Dec.); Beating the Rap (*S. E. P.*, June 15).

Bretherton, Vivien R., The Heart of Don Juan (*McCall*, Feb.).

Brigg, Nicholas, The Meanest Man (*W.*, Nov., 11); In the Ice (*Col.*, Mch. 9).

Briggs, John, The Whistling Bandit (*S. S.*, Nov. 25).

Bromfield, Louis, A Romantic Letter (*H. B.*, Mch.).

Brooks, George S., Writer's Cramp (*Col.*, Dec. 1); The Boy Friend of Broadway (*Scr.*, Jan.).

Brooks, Jonathan, Sportsmanship (*C. H.*, Nov.); Homecoming (*C. L.*, Jan.).

Brown, Bernice, Phyllis Steps Out (*L. H. J.*, Oct.); "Open Season" (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).

Brown, Guthrie, King Bolt (*Ad.*, Feb. 1).

Brown, Katharine Holland, Pay Your Money and Take Your Choice (*W. H. C.*, Jan.).

Brown, Royal, Most Men Are (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.); Absolutely No "It" (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Red Heads (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).

Brubaker, Howard, Barbarous Barbara (*Am.*, Apr.); The Milk Pitcher (*C. G.*, June).

Brush, Katharine, Bunny's Aunt Matilda (*P. R.*, June); "Good Scouts" (*R. B.*, July).

Buckley, F. R., In Every Port (*Ad.*, Oct. 1); When the Second Mate Became an Earl (*McClure*, Dec.); Scar (*Ad.*, Jan. 15).

Burlingame, Roger, The Island off St. George (*F.*, Apr.).

Burman, Ben Lucien, The Profaning of Granny Run (*P. R.*, June).
Burnet, Dana, Just What She Wanted (*Col.*, Dec. 22).
Burt, Katharine Newlin, The Winged Man (*Am.*, Sept.); The Waiting Mountains (*C. T.*, Oct. 7); Old Loyalty (*Am.*, July).
Burt, Struthers, Honeysuckle (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 9); Artists (*S. E. P.*, June 1).
Butler, Ellis Parker, Wanted: A Burglar (*W. H. C.*, Jan.); Good Graft (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Cameron, Anne, Rolling Stones Don't Like Moss, Anyhow (*S. E. P.*, May 11).
Campbell, Evelyn, Trapeze (*G. H.*, Oct.).
Canfield, Dorothy, The Godfather from the Machine (*W. H. C.*, Sept.).
Carrington, Elaine Sterne, The Rossiter Child (*P. R.*, Dec.).
Carroll, Richard, The Boob (*L.*, Jan. 26).
Carse, Robert, Fear (*S. S.*, Feb. 10); Tennessee (*S. S.*, Feb. 25); Escape (*Ad.*, July 1).
Cary, Lucian, Two Men (*McClure*, Dec.); Not the Girl of His Dreams (*S. E. P.*, May 11).
Chambers, Canby, $100,000—and 3 cents (*L.*, Apr. 6).
Chambers, Robert W., A Major Operation (*Mun.*, Sept.).
Chapman, Arthur, The Wolf and the Fold (*L.*, Oct. 13).
Chapman, Maristan, Sib to We'uns (*C.*, Nov.).
Chenicek, Albert, "Send Me the Bill" (*A. A.*, Sept. 29).
Child, Richard Washburn, The President Appoints (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13).
Coatsworth, Elizabeth, Taza (*Atl.*, June).
Cobb, Irvin S., The Promised Land (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); Haste Makes Waste (*H. I and C.*, Oct.); Red is Red (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); The Crime of Queer Creek (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Coe, Charles Francis, Fair Exchange (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27); A Crook's a Crook (*S. E. P.*, June 1).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, Meddle Play (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13); Violent Ray (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 15); Haven (*R.*, Jan.); Five Aces and a Kicker (*C. G.*, Mch.); Fast and Curious (*C. T.*, May 19); The Leased of These (*S. E. P.*, July 13).
Coleman, Alta May, Mistakes Will Happen (*C. T.*, Oct. 21).
Comfort, Will Levington, Len Vittie, Descanso (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20).
Condon, Frank, Flash Back (*Col.*, Sept. 8); Rivets (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22); The Repeater (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20).

Connell, Richard, Kitski (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10); Why Boys Leave Home (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 17); Pat and Mike (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); Beau Pest (*P. R.*, Jan.); Mr. Pottle and the Russian Problem (*McClure*, Feb.); The Obstacle Race (*S. E. P.*, June 8.)

Connor, Glenn A., Slick Dillon (*Cow.*, Feb.)

Cooper, Courtney Ryley, The Punk Boss (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 15); The Terror of the Big Top (*S. S.*, Apr. 25).

Cooper, Edgar L., Hawks of the Night (*War*, Oct. 25).

Cooper, Mary Lispenard, The Vestal (*H.*, Sept.).

Corbett, Elizabeth, Scenery (*C.*, Oct.).

Corcoran, William, Night Ride (*Ad.*, Nov. 1); Hack Line (*A. A.*, Dec. 15).

Courtney, W. B., Relief (*Col.*, Mch. 9).

Cram, Mildred, Birthday (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15); Tell Me (*D.*, July).

Crane, Earl Benham, The Secret of the Golden Isle (*Ev.*, Nov.).

Crosby, Percy, Skippy and Sooky (*L. H. J.*, Oct.); Skippy and Barrelhead (*L. H. J.*, Feb.)

Crowell, Chester T., Congratulations (*Col.*, Oct. 13); The Suppressed Story of Mrs. Jackson (*Am.*, Nov.).

Cunningham, C., Melodrama (*Y.*, Mch.).

Cunningham, Louis Arthur, Wise Woman (*C. L.*, Feb.).

Curry, Tom, The Taste of Blood (*B. M.*, Feb.).

Curtiss, Philip, A Guest in the House (*P. R.*, Oct.); The Honorable Charley (*H.*, June).

Davies, Mary Carolyn, The Other Woman (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).

Davies, Oma Almona, Worms Can Turn Yet (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20); Livestocks and Laughingstocks (*S. E. P.*, May 18); Engaged to the Smallpox (*S. E. P.*, June 8); Selling Stock Short (*S. E. P.*, June 29).

Davis, Elmer, Pride of the Family (*L.*, Apr. 13); The Meek Inherit (*Col.*, June 29).

De Bra, Lemuel, The Hon'ble Code of Ah Fu (*B. B.*, Oct.); Not for Sale (*B. B.*, Apr.).

Delano, Edith Barnard, A Good Home (*Am.*, Nov.); Birds in Their Little Nests (*C. G.*, Jan.); The Heart That Has Truly Loved (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); Henry's Divorce (*L. H. J.*, June).

Dellinger, E. S., In the Ditch (*Ad.*, Feb. 1); Broken Seals (*Ad.*, Feb. 15).

Delmar, Viña, The Grandmother (*L.*, Sept. 15); The Little Theater (*L.*, Oct. 13); Daily Tabloid (Man Hurls Self

from "L" Structure) (*L.*, Nov. 10); Daily Tabloid (Hunt Continues for Kidnaped Child Mother Despairs of Recovery) (*L.*, Jan.); Sheba (*R. B.*, Feb.); Daily Tabloid (Crippled Girl Strangled by Husband on Wedding Day) (*L.*, Feb. 16); Dance Hall (*L.*, Mch. 16); Tough Luck (*L.*, June 8).

De Polo, Harold, A Matter of Close Perception (*D. F.*, Feb. 23).

Derieux, Mary, Silver Birch (*D.*, June).

Derieux, Samuel A., The Sheriff (*Am.*, Oct.).

Detzer, Karl W., The Come-Along Lady (*C.*, Sept.).

De Voto, Bernard, Teamwork (*R. B.*, Oct.); The Popular Proverbs of Baron O-No (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 27); Gaily the Troubadour (*R. B.*, Nov.).

Dickson, Harris, The Fishbook Lawyer (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20).

D'Orsay, Laurence, He Stoops to Conquer (*W. H. C.*, Sept.).

Douglas, Marjory Stoneman, Second Marriage (*C. T.*, Jan. 6).

Driscoll, Charles B., Eve Leads the Elephant (*C. W.*, Jan.).

Du Bois, Theodora, Gold Horns and Sandals (*C.*, Nov.).

Duganne, Phyllis, Doorknobs (*Col.*, Nov. 10).

Du Poise, Ellen, A Dante of the Barns (*H.*, Dec.).

Duranty, Walter, Leningrad's Lucky House (C., Mch.).

Duvernois, Henri, The Old Maid (*P. T.*, May).

Eberhardt, Walter F., She Gave up Stardom (*W.*, Mch. 3).

Edgar, Day, This Above All (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15).

Edholm, Charlton Lawrence, The Golden Thief of T'orh (*W.*, Feb. 17).

Edmonds, Walter D., Death of Red Peril (*Atl.*, Nov.).

Ellerbee, Alma and Paul, Greasewood and Greasepaint (*W. H. C.*, Mch.).

Elston, Allan Vaughan, Table Stakes (*Ad.*, Nov. 1.).

Ernst, Paul, Witch's Curse (*W. T.*, Feb.).

Evans, Ida M., The Ancient Fire (*C. T.*, Nov. 25); Poppies on Palisades (*C. G.*, June).

Evarts, Hal. G., Trout Meadow (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 16); Ride and Tie (*S. E. P.*, May 25); The River Bottom (*S. E. P.*, July 6).

Ewing, Hall, The Stampeder (*Cow.*, Feb.).

Farmer, Bernard J., Finished with Engines (*A. A.*, Mch. 16).

Fisher, Pearl, High Falutin' (*Op.*, Oct.).

Fishman, Joseph Fulling, Fine Feathers (*D. F.*, Feb. 2).

Fitzgerald, Edith, Poor Old Sam (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 3); The Two-a-Day (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30); The Kiddie (*S. E. P.*, June 29).

Fitzgerald, F. Scott, He Thinks He's Wonderful (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29); The Captured Shadow (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 29); The Rough Crossing (*S. E. P.*, June 8); Majesty (*S. E. P.*, July 13).

Flynn, T. T., The Efficiency of Eli Tarbox (*McClure*, Oct.); Fresh Fish and Eve (R., Nov.); The Wise Guy (*D. F.*, Nov. 24).

Ford, Corey, Finger-Tips (*H. B.*, May).

Ford, Sewell, Poet and Plumber (*Col.*, Sept. 1); Egbert, Hath-Wroughter (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22).

Franklin, George Cory, Red Cloud's Revenge (*Cow.*, First Nov. No.); The Single-Handed Kid (*Cow.*, Feb.).

Fraser, Ferrin L., All Our Life Like That! (*Col.*, Mch. 2).

Freeman, Charles A., Bullet Busters (*Ac.*, Feb.).

Friel, Arthur O., Scarlet Face (*Ad.*, June 1).

Frost, Meigs, O. Boys Will be Boys (*S. S.*, Feb. 10).

Frost, Walter Archer, Dealers of Death (*D. F.*, Nov. 24).

Fullerton, Hugh, Judgment Crow (*Am.*, Sept.).

Gale, Zona, And Then Things Will Be as They Used to Be (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Summer Follies (*H. B.*, July).

Gardner, Erle Stanley, Curse of the Killers (*B. M.*, Nov.); A Hot Tip (*D. F.*, May 21).

Garrard, William, Her Will (*Y.*, Feb.).

Gatlin, Dana, Enter the Prince (*R. B.*, May).

Gelzer, Jay, Broadway Musketeers (*G. H.*, Oct.).

Gerould, Gordon Hall, How It Was (*Scr.*, Oct.).

Gerould, Katharine Fullerton, Idle Hands (*H.*, Dec.); His Sunsets (*H.*, Mch.); Cradle-Snatcher (*P. R.*, Mch.).

Gilpatric, Guy, The Infant Turrible (*Col.*, Dec. 22); The Bride of Ballyhoo (*C. H.*, Jan.); In Such Happy Circumstances (*R. B.*, July).

Givens, Colonel, The Flop (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 27); Cry-Baby (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 19).

Glass, Montague, They Cared Nothing for Money (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); Mr. and Mrs. Dainin (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.); And Druggists Have Troubles Too (*H. I. and C.*, June).

Goodwyn, Mona March, Front Page Stuff (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).

Gordon, Eugene, Buzzards (*Op.*, Nov.); Sarcophagus (*S. E. Q.*, Sec. No., Apr.).

Greely, J. N., Something Happened (*Mun.*, Oct.).

Green, Walton, Little Solly Learns (*L.*, Nov. 17); Return of Edmund Davey (*C. T.*, June 2).

Grey, Clifford, Norman and the Green-Eyed Monster (*D.*, Feb.).
Gromer, Belle Burns, The Guarded Mask (*D.*, Oct.).
Hadakin, Helen, Missing (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Hagedorn, Herman, Blue Eyed Johnny (*McClure*, Oct.).
Hall, Norman S., Souvenir (*L.*, Nov. 24).
Hallet, Richard Matthews, Local Time (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15); Gambler's Gold (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10); March Hill (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 8); Traders' Risks (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 16).
Hanlon, Brooke, May (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 3); The Trousseau (*Hol.*, Mch.); Conviction of Sin (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 23); Emma Zinsmeister: Anno 1782 (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 20); Without Caviar (*W. H. C.*, July); A Blonde Can Think Maybe (*S. E. P.*, July 13).
Hare, Amory, Sung in the Street (*H. B.*, Feb.).
Harmon, Beatrice, Illusion (*L.*, Sept. 29); A Saga of the Wastelands (*L.*, Oct. 27).
Harner, Virginia Paxton, Doll Face (*R. B.*, Feb.).
Harris, Kennett, The Toad and the Puddle (*S. E. P.*, June 29).
Hartley, Roland English, A Victim of Circumstances (*C.*, June).
Hartwick, Mary Hesse, Homesteaders' Trail (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Haycox, Ernest, Watch Fires (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); Fandango (*S. S.*, Oct. 25).
Hellman, Sam, Breaking the Will of Allah (*R. B.*, Oct.).
Helm, Carl, "B for Billygoat?" (*Mun.*, Nov.).
Herrick, Maude Zella, Lily Pays the Gas Bill (*R. B.*, Sept.).
Hill, Drew, They Never Talk About It (*Col.*, Oct. 6).
Hinds, Roy W., Simon Trapp's "Sumpin Nice" (*D. S. M.*, Feb. 16).
Holt, Franklin, The Wuthless Dog (*Scr.*, Feb.).
Holt, George E., What Wall Street Missed (*Col.*, May 25).
Hope, Edward, Adventure on a Water-Wagon (*L.*, Sept. 8); Requiescat (*L.*, Jan. 5).
Hopper, James, The Bench in the Sun (*W. H. C.*, May).
Howard, Clifford, The Delevan Case (*D. F.*, May 25).
Hoys, Dudley, In the Blood (*A. A.*, May 18).
Hoyt, Nancy, Salty also Serves (*C. H.*, Apr.).
Hughes. Richard, High Wind in Jamaica (*F.*, Dec.).
Hughes, Rupert, The Rented Body (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Baby's Shoes (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Humphries, Adelaide, Sophisticated Stuff (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.).
Hunt, Stranger, What the Attic Told (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 17); Two-Tine Mystery (*D. S. M.*, Feb. 16).

Hunter, John, The Vanishing Emerald (*D. F.*, Nov. 3).
Hurlbut, William, Importance (*C.*, Sept.); Blue Gentian (*C.*, May).
Hurst, Fannie, Hossie Frossie (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); The 3rd Husband (*H. I. and C.*, Dec.).
Huston, McCready, A Pair of Shoes (*H. B.*, Oct.).
Huysman, Steve J., Absalom (*P. R.*, May).
Hyland, Dick, Crossed Signals (*C. T.*, Nov. 4).
Hyland, Dick, and St. Johns, Adela Rogers, All Things Show It (*C. H.*, Oct.).
Irvine, Bryan, The Crush Out (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 17).
Irwin, Inez Haynes, Royal Blood (*C. T.*, Sept. 23); The Ride (*C.*, Dec.).
Irwin, Wallace, The Husband in Waiting (*C. H.*, Apr.); Mr. Fennig's Wardrobe (*W. H. C.*, May); Dot and Carry Ten (*P. R.*, June).
Ives, Mary Hélène, A Free Man (*Y.*, Nov.).
Jacks, Leo V., A Fireside Rendezvous (*Mun.*, Oct.); One Hundred Per Cent (*Scr.*, Nov.).
Jackson, Charles Tenney, White Fire (*S. S.*, Nov. 25).
Jackson, Margaret Weymouth, A Clean Cut (*W. H. C.*, Oct.); Mustard Flower (*C. G.*, July); A Year to Wait (*S. E. P.*, July 6).
Jameson, Booth, A Hitch-Hiking Reformer (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22); Just Students (*S. E. P.*, Oct., 13); The Professional Santa Claus (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Janis, Elsie, and Markey, Gene, Close Harmony (*R. B.*, Sept.); Business is Pleasure (*R. B.*, Oct.).
Jenkins, MacGregor, Alcantara (*All.*, Feb.).
Jenks, Almet, A Question of Taste (*S. E. P.*, May 11); Small Fry (*S. E. P.*, July 13).
John, William M., Concernin' Names (*C.*, Sept.); That Passeth Understandin' (*C.*, Feb.).
Johnson, Burges, A Helping Hand (*Scr.*, July).
Johnson, Nunnally, The World's Shortest Love Affair (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 27); The Infamous Miss Quain (*Smart Set*, Feb.); A Pain in the Neck (*S. E. P.*, April 20); The Pagliacci Blues (*S. E. P.*, June 22).
Johnston, Mary, The Two Business Men (*H.*, Sept.); The Mockingbird (*L. H. J.*, Nov.); The Baptizing (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).
Davis, John, May the Best Man Win (*S. S.*, Feb. 25).
Jordan, Elizabeth, Ally Takes a Stand (*Col.*, Dec. 29).

Jorgenson, Nels Leroy, Jungle Fever (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Jumbo (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8); Muffled (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29); The Covered Bridge (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10); There's Nothing They Want (*L. H. J.*, Dec.); Lulu (*S. E. P.* Dec. 22); Unto the Hills (*Am.*, Feb.); Witness (*C. G.*, July).
Kantor, MacKinlay, Ballots and Bullets (*Mun.*, June).
Kaye, Nina, The Pretender (*Am. H.*, Apr.).
Keene, Faraday, The Second Impulse (*C.*, July).
Kelland, Clarence Budington, Scattergood and the Square Peg (*Am.*, Sept.); Badge of Office (*C. G.*, Sept.); Scattergood Compounds a Felony (*Am.*, Oct.); An Underhanded Business (*Col.*, Oct. 6); Plenty of Putts (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 6); Unabridged (*Col.*, Nov. 10); A Matter of Grammar (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 8); Corpus Delicti (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 2); Preventive Medicine (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 16); Till the Vote's Counted (*S. E. P.*, May 4); Fire with Fire (*L. H. J.*, June); "I Never Saw a Duke Before" (*Col.*, June 15); The Thinker (*Am.*, July); Petticoats (*S. E. P.*, July 13).
Kemp, H. S. M., Chances Even (*S. S.*, Nov. 25).
Kennedy, John B., The Last Trick (*Col.*, Feb. 2).
Kennedy, J., Orde, Beauty-Proof (*H. B.*, Oct.).
Kerr, Sophie, Fifty Pieces of Silver (*W. H. C.*, Sept.); The Celebrated Bowowkus Diet (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 2); The Slave (*W. H. C.*, May); The Eternal Count (*W. H. C.*, July).
Kilbourne, Fannie, A Flurry in Wall Street (*McCall*, Sept.); Dot Rushes in Where Wisdom Fears to Tread (*Am.*, Oct.); Walled Garden (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).
King, Beulah, Cicelys Hands (*W.*, Dec. 30).
Kirk, R. G., Lady Bess (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13).
Kittredge, Eleanor Hayden, September Sailing (*H.*, July).
Klahr, Evelyn Gill, Fate and the Goldfish (*H.*, Jan.).
Knowlton, Don, Murder (*Scr.*, Apr.).
Kohler, Madeline, The Green Umbrella (*W.*, Dec. 16).
Kutner, Nanette, Change of a Dollar (*G. H.*, Nov.).
Kyne, Peter B., Good Dog (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); The Song of the Bee (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.); A Ringer (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); Old Man Tooker's Investment (*H. I. and C.*, June).
La Cossit, Henry, The Mob (*Ad.*, Oct. 1).
Lambert, Reita, The Past Hunters (*McCall*, Feb.).
Lane, Rose Wilder, Gypsy Trail (*L. H. J.*, Feb.); The Ruction in Eden (*C. G.*, Mch.).

Lardner, Ring W., The Maysville Minstrel (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.); Old Folks' Christmas (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); High-Rollers (*H. I. and C.*, June).

Lauriston, Victor and De Cartier, W., Twenty-Two Dogs (*R. B.*, Feb.).

Lea, Fanny Heaslip, Until That Day (*S. E. P.*, May 4); The Moth (*S. E. P.*, May 18).

Leddy, Virginia, and Somerville, A. W., The Hoodlum (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 3).

Le Gallienne, Richard, The Girl Who Was the Moon (*H. B.*, June).

Le May, Alan, The Wolf Hunter (*Col.*, May 18).

Lewis, George Warburton, Queer Cargo (*Ac.*, Dec.).

Lewis, Sinclair, Elizabeth, Kitty, and Jane (*H. I. and C.*, July).

Liebe, Hapsburg, West of the Whistler (*R.*, Jan.).

Lieferant, Henry and Sylvia, Doctor Lady (*W. H. C.*, July).

Lincoln, Freeman, Postscript (*L. H. J.*, Oct.).

Lincoln, Joseph C., Limits (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 24).

Linklater, J. Lane, The Farewell Song (*A. A.*, Nov. 3).

Lloyd, Beatrix Demarest, De Rougemont's Yankee (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 6).

Lovecraft, H. P., The Silver Key (*W. T.*, Jan.).

Lovelace, Delos W., The Stubborn Stebbins (*C. G.*, Nov.).

Lubitz, Beatrice, Whose Career? (*L.*, Nov. 24).

Luhrs, Marie, Pure Egyptian (*Am. H.*, Oct. 5).

Luther, Mark Lee, French Hats (*L.*, Sept. 22).

McBlair, Robert, High Water (*Elks*, June).

Mabie, Louise Kennedy, Madam Venus (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 6); Hearts and Flowers (*S. E. P.*, June 22).

McCallum, Mella Russell, A Daughter of the Arts (*L. H. J.*, Mch.).

McFadden, Frances, Party in a Penthouse (*P. R.*, May).

McGrew, Don, The Thirty-First Piece of Silver (*A. A.*, Nov. 10).

MacHarg, William, The Lady Killer (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).

McKenna, Edward L., Sandpipers (*W.*, Nov. 18).

McLean, Margharite Fisher, Letters of a Ranch Woman (*Scr.*, May).

McLellan, Howard, The Twelve-Dollar Front (*Col.*, Sept. 8).

McMorrow, Thomas, Insufficient Funds (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 22); Unreal Property (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 23); Steinweg against Bonn (*S. E. P.*, June 8); People against Saladene (*S. E. P.*, June 29); Happy Ending (*S. E. P.*, July 6).

McNary, Herbert, In the Shadow of the Goal (*B. B.*, Oct.).

McNutt, William Slavens, Hot Dogs (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 17); All Messed Up (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 1); Smiling Jimmy Touts (*R. B.*, Mch.); Airedale Blood (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13); Racketeer (*R. B.*, May); Big Time (*S. E. P.*, May 25).

Macumber, Marie, Dumb Cattle (*Pr. S.*, Winter, 1929).

Mahoney, James, The Nerve (*P. R.* Sept.); The Slave (*P. R.*, Nov.)

Marquand, John P., Oh, Major, Major (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27); The Rain of Right (*S. E. P.*, May 11); And Another Redskin (*S. E. P.*, May 18); The Darkest Horse (*S. E. P.*, May 25).

Marquis, Don, A Very Respectable Man (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Exit the King (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); Rattlesnake Golf (*Am.*, June); The Strong Grasses (*Col.*, June).

Mason, Grace Sartwell, Bag of Wind (*W. H. C.*, June).

Mauck, Hilda, The Mutiny of a Hero (*G. H.*, Oct.).

Maxwell, Cliff, Slim (*Scr.*, Feb.).

May, Margery Land, Pard (*Am.*, Feb.).

Maynard, Lawrence M., Murder in the Making (*Am. Merc.*, June).

Means, E. K., Hone Again (*Mun.*, June).

Mercein, Eleanor, The Road Away (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 9).

Merwin, Samuel, The Monkey Wrench (*Col.*, Sept. 15); You Never Know (*Col.*, Feb. 16); Trick Stuff (*Col.*, Feb. 23); Life Isn't Like That (*L. H. J.*, Mch.); "What a Woman Wants" (*Col.*, Mch. 9).

Miller, Alice Duer, Corinna Finds Employment (*W. H. C.*, Oct.) Plum Pudding and Mince Pie (*W. H. C.*, Dec.).

Miller, Helen Topping, Dust (*Y.*, Sept.); Barber, Barber, Shave a Pig (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29).

Miller, Laura, Hill Man (*Mys.*, Oct.).

Mintzer, L. Murney, Fifteen Men and a Boat (*Sea*, Feb.).

Mitchell, Ruth Comfort, The Make-Up Tree (*L. H. J.*, Oct.); Happy Dust (*W. H. C.*, Mch.); Neighbor, Neighbor (*L. H. J.*, July).

Montross, Lois Seyster, Fools About Love (*S. E P.*, Feb. 2).

Montross, Lynn and Lois, Bill Lait and Our Feathered Friends (*C. H.*, Sept.); Feed a Fever (*C. H.*, Oct.); The Seventh Fair Lady (*C. H.*, Oct.); Midsemester Night's Dream (*C. H.*, Nov.); The Shadow of the Ape (*C. H.*, Nov.); Left Jab (*C. H.*, Dec.).

Montross, Lynn, The Swat Complex (*Col.*, Oct. 13); The Silent Minstrel (*Am.*, Dec.).

Moroso, John A., Tierney Serves Corned Beef (*Am. B.*, July).
Morris, Gouverneur, Bully Missionary (*L.*, Oct. 13); P. D. F. (*L.*, Nov. 10); Shoes (*L.*, Mch. 16).
Muilenberg, Cornelius Marion, Sadie (*Pr. S.*, Spring, 1929).
Mulhern, Alice Wade, A Bird's Nest (*Scr.*, May)
Mumford, Ethel Watts, Two Letters (L., May 11).
Mundy, Talbot, A Tucket of Drums (*Ad.*, Feb. 1).
Munro, Meeda, The Witch of La Tourette (*Mun.*, Mch.).
Munyan, Arthur, T., Ailsa (*L.*, Sept. 29).
Mygatt, Gerald, A Quart of White Shellac (*C. H.*, Sept.); The Enchanting One (*L. H. J.*, Mch); When Gertie Squared Him (*L.*, May 18).
Nason, Leonard H., Men from Chicago (*S. E. P.*, Mch, 16).
Naylor, C. J., Behind Her Picture (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Nebel, Frederick L., Proud Youth (*Elks*, Dec.).
Neidig, William J., Greased Pig (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20); Nothing Over Ten Cents (*S. E. P.*, June 22).
Norris, Kathleen, Monkey House (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.).
Oliver, Jennie Harris, The Long Bow (*G. H.*, Nov.).
Oliver, William E., Oak Leaves and Shovels (*War*, Feb. 28).
Oppenheim, James, The Kidnapping of Leda Barrie (*Smart Set*, Nov.)
Parker, Austin, The Untamed (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8); Discord (*L.*, Oct. 27).
Parker, Maude, Forty (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 17).
Patterson, Norma, West (*G. H.*, May); The Whoffing Gods (*C. T.*, May 26).
Payne, Stephen, Shod Hoofs (*Cow.*, First Oct. No.); On Circle (*Cow.*, Sec. Oct. No.).
Pearsall, Robert J., Birds of Changing Feathers (*Pop.*, First Feb. No.).
Peattie, Louis Redfield, East Injy (*L. H. J.*, Feb.).
Pelley, William Dudley, The Man Who Believed in God (*Am.*, Nov.); Only a Barber (*C. T.*, Nov. 18); The Woman Across the Street (*Am.*, Apr.); An Eagle Flies (*Col.*, June 15).
Pendexter, Hugh, Gambler's Luck (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Perry, Lawrence, The Man Who Wouldn't Quit (*McClure*, Sept.); Janet Roy (*L. H. J.*, June).
Perry, Ralph, Seaworthy (*Ad.*, Nov. 15).
Petersen, Elizabeth Benneche, The Bridal Chest (*G. H.*, Feb.).
Phillips, Michael J., The Right Guy (*B. B.*, Feb.).

Phillips, Roland Ashford, The Sun in Their Eyes (*R.*, Feb.).
Pladwell, E. S., The Rawhide Reformers (*S. S.*, Feb. 25).
Poole, Ernest, Within the Safe (*L.*, Oct. 6); The Fairy Tale of Benjamin (*L. H. J.*, Feb.); The Car of Croesus (*L. H. J.*, Apr.).
Porter, Martin J., The Seventh Card (*D. F.*, Feb. 2).
Portor, Laura Spencer, Conspiracy (*H.*, Apr.).
Post, Melville Davisson, Colonel Braxton Hears the Silent Voices (*Am.*, Sept.); The Vanished Man (*Am.*, Feb.).
Putnam, Nina Wilcox, A Hoot for Social Position (*L. H. J.*, Mch.); A Real Good Girl (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Quinn, Seabury, The Devil-People (*W. T.*, Feb.).
Raht, Carlysle Graham, Violence (*S. S.*, Oct. 10).
Raine, Norman Reilly, Master of His Ship (*S. S.*, Nov. 25); A Valor Ruined Man (*Ad.*, Apr. 15).
Redman, Ben Ray, Morale (*Ad.*, Feb. 15).
Rees, John P., Moonshine (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Rhoades, Howard, A Poet in Moleskins (*A. A.*, Oct. 20).
Rhodes, Eugene Manlove, Trail's End (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Richmond, Rebecca, Alarm Clock Blues (*D.*, July).
Rinehart, Mary Roberts, The Dipper (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13); The Second Honeymoon (*L. H. J.*, July).
Risley, Eleanor, Mountaineers and Mill Folks (*Atl.*, Nov.).
Robbin, Edward, Malka (*Men.*, Feb.).
Roberts, Elizabeth Madox, Children of the Earth (*H.*, Nov.).
Robin, Max, Like of a Bathwoman (*Men.*, Sept.).
Robinson, Grace, Tiger! Tiger! (*L.*, Jan. 5).
Roe, Vingie E., The Love of Little Feet (*McCall*, May).
Rogers, Bogart, Dead Game (*L.*, June 8).
Rohde, Robert H., Close Herded (*S. S.*, Nov. 25); Macy's Window (*D. F.*, May 18).
Ross, Mary Lowrey, Naïve (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 16).
Rouse, William Merriam, The Judgment (*Mun.*, Oct.); Men of Iron (*A. A.*, Nov. 17).
Ryan, Stella, The Wine-Dark Sea (*P. R.*, Sept.).
St. Johns, Adela Rogers, Room Rent (*McClure*, Oct.).
Sanborn, Ruth Burr, I Can't Explain It (*Col.*, Sept. 29); Henery Was a Cave Man (*Col.*, Oct. 27).
Sangster, Margaret, The Lost Fifty Minutes (*McCall*, Feb.); Little Boy Blue (*G. H.*, Mch.).
Sapin, Ruth, The Great Impelizer (*Hol.*, Nov.).

Sass, Herbert Ravenel, Winged Wolf (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Saturen, Eve, Clothes for Women (*Am. H.*, July 5).
Saunders, Louise, A Difference in Ceremony (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Savell, Morton, The Key to His Conscience (*P. S. M.*, Jan.).
Saxby, Chester L., One Mile Thick (*Ad.*, May 15).
Schaffner, Halle, On the Heels of Fate (*P. R.*, Sept.).
Schalk, Gertrude, The Red Cape (*S. E. Q.*, Sec. No., April).
Scherman, Bernardine Kielty, Taxi! Taxi! (*P. S. M.*, Dec.).
Schindler, Frank J., A Bass Drum for Louie (*Ad.*, Oct. 1).
Schisgall, Oscar, The Storm Scene (*C. T.*, Sept. 2).
Scoggins, C. E., Jungle (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10).
Scott, R. T. M., The Case of Bernice Asterley (*R. D. T.*, Mch.); Senga of the Club Hibou (*R. D. T.*, Apr.-May).
Seaver, Edwin, The Desk (*Book.*, Apr.).
Seifert, Shirley, Honeybunch (*L.*, Feb. 23); Path of Justice (*D.*, June).
Shannon, Robert Terry, Once in a Lifetime (*A. A.*, Oct. 27).
Shaw, Frank H., Otto Graustok (*Sea*, Jan.).
Sheean, Vincent, Christine's Last Party (*C.*, June).
Sheehan, Murray, Ma Gillespie Speaks Up (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).
Shenton, Edward, Seasons End (*Scr.*, Nov.).
Sherwood, Robert Emmet, Commencement (*H. B.*, June).
Shumway, Harry Irving, The Rescue of Donna Isabella (*Y. C.*, Oct.); The Swan Song of Cicero (*Y. C.*, July).
Sigmund, Jay G., Two Errands (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Singer, Mary, One Little Kick (*G. H.*, Mch.)
Singmaster, Elsie, Christmas in Virginia (*P. R.*, Dec. 1); Escapade (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 15).
Small, Sidney Herschel, Matched Sable (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29).
Smith, Charles Edward, Davey's Gal (*C.*, June).
Smith, Edgar Valentine, Brother to the Ox (*Elks*, Dec.); Nosey's Code (*S. S.*, Dec. 10); Freed (*Scr.*, June).
Smith, Wallace, Gold-Digger (*R. B.*, July).
Smith, Willard K., The Tooth of Time (*S. S.*, Feb. 25).
Somerville, A. W., Highball! (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22); Valhalla (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12).
Spears, Raymond S., Austin Picks a Ranger (*Ad.*, Sept. 15).
Springs, Elliott White, Remarkable Girl! (*R. B.*, Sept.); Delayed Fuse (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.); 1916 (*L.*, Dec. 22); The Frame-up (*L.*, Mch. 9).
Squier, Emma-Lindsay, Three on a Match (*Col.*, Feb. 16).

Stait, Virginia, "Currents" (*Westm.*, Dec.); Back Water (*Westm.*, Mch.)

Stallings, Laurence, Turn Out the Guard (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13); Ginsberg and the Eighteenth-Century Manner (*Scr.*, Mch.).

Starrett, Vincent, The Testimony of the Dog (*Mys.*, Jan.).

Stebbins, Walter, The Last Laugh (*D. F.*, May 21).

Steele Harwood, The Lost Day (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).

Steele, Paul, Rim o' the World (*R. B.*, June).

Steele, Wilbur Daniel, Winter Wheat (*P. R.*, Sept.); Survivor (*P. R.*, May).

Stevens, James, The Hellion (*Col.*, Dec. 29).

Stilson, Charles B., Borrowed Courage (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).

Stone, Elinore Cowan, White Lilacs (*G. H.*, May).

Styron, Arthur, Against the Wind (*War*, July 4).

Suckow, Ruth, The Big Kids and the Little Kids (*G. H.*, Jan.); The Valentine Box (*G. H.*, Feb.); Strong as a Man (*H.*, Apr.); Visiting (*P. R.*, July).

Sullivan, Charles J., In the Guest Room (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).

Sutherland, H. M., Without Quarter (*Ev.*, Nov.).

Swain, John D., Mr. Hobo (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 17); The Documents in the Case (*D. F.*, Apr. 20).

Swain, J. Howard, His Man (*S. S.*, Oct. 10).

Synon, Mary, A Carolan Comes Home (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); Strike up the Band (*G. H.*, Mch.); A Little House of Her Own (*G. H.*, Apr.); Two Women Who Waited (*McCall*, July).

Tarkington, Booth, Logansville and Mary's Neck (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 23); Mr. Massey and Modernism (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13).

Tarleton, Fiswoode, Domain (*Ad.*, May 1).

Taylor, Katharine Haviland, "Loved I Not Honor More" (*C. G.*, Sept.).

Terhune, Albert Payson, Hero (*D.*, Oct.); A Hater of Dogs (*R. B.*, Nov.); "How's Zat?" (*R. B.*, Feb.).

Terhune, Anice, Revolt (*G. H.*, Feb.).

Terrill, Lucy Stone, Every Prospect Pleases (*S. E. P.*, June 1).

Tetlow, Henry, The Light That Never Was (*F.*, Nov.).

Thane, Elswyth, Homing (*Hol.*, July).

Thibault, David, Clay Versus Transportation (*L. H. J.*, May); Open to Argument (*Col.*, July 6).

Thomas, Elizabeth Finley, Treasures on Earth (*C.*, July).

Thompson, Don H., The Quest of the Green Book (*D. F.*, May 4).

Tiernan, John L., The Strange Voice (*D. F.*, Nov. 24).

Titus, Harold, Faith in a Day (*C. G.*, Nov.); The Bell on Hag's Teeth (*C. G.*, Feb.); The Shacker (*B. B.*, Apr.); Neighbors (*C. G.*, Apr.).
Titzell, Josiah, The Guinea-Hen (*C.*, Feb.).
Tompkins, Juliet Wilbor, Young Lovers (*G. H.*, Nov.).
Toohey, John Peter, Not a Part of the Play (*McClure*, Oct.).
Topham, Thomas, The Magnificent Thief (*Mys.*, Feb.); A Snitch in Time (*D. F.*, May 18).
Torgerson, Edwin Dial, Intensely Human (*C. H.*, Mch.).
Torrey, Grace, Exit (*L. H. J.*, Nov.).
Trevor, Roy, The Pearl Necklace (*Ev.*, Nov.).
Tuttle, Margaretta, Before I Wake (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 9).
Upson, William Hazlett, Secondhand Stuff (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8); The Big Endurance Test (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22); Sandy Inlet (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 15).
Vance, John Frazier, Return (*H.*, Apr.).
Vandercook, John W., The No-Good Coaster (*H.*, May).
Van de Water, Frederic, Dawn (*McCall*, Nov.).
Van Dine, S. S., The Almost Perfect Crime (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Van Dyke, Catherine, A Letter from Pontius Pilate's Wife (*P. R.*, Apr.).
Vontver, May, The Kiskis (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Waldron, Marion and Webb, Cousin Captain (*D.*, Mch.).
Walker, Ewing, The Silks of Oakmead (*R. B.*, Dec.).
Wallace, Warrack, The Laughing Joss (*W.*, Sept. 2).
Ward, Millard, The Chief Engineer's Door (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 15); The Q Buoy (*Ev.*, Oct.); Clipper-Bow (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 29).
Warfield, Frances, Boy's Head (*H.*, July).
Warren, Lella, The Little Girl Next Door (*G. H.*, Oct.).
Warren, Maude Radford, The Sea King's Luck (*Col.*, Apr. 20).
Watkins, Mary F., A Background for Cleo (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 26); A Guest Performance (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 16).
Watkins, Maurine, Common Sense (*H. I and C.*, Jan.).
Watkins, Richard Howells, Quagmire (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); Crash or Credit (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 16).
Weaver, John V. A., and Wood, Peggy, The Farsighted Cat (*L. H. J.*, Sept.).
Weiman, Rita, The Poor Sport (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).
Welch, Florence Dorsey, The Spider with Hobnail Boots (*Hol.*, Feb.).

Wells, Harriet, Her Majesty Commands (*W. H. C.*, Nov.); Chinese Night (*Scr.*, Feb).
Wertenbaker, Charles, Sleepy-Eye (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8); Will You Walk a Little Faster (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20).
West, Ann, Where the Heron Flies (*P.*, Oct.).
West, Duffy R., The Revolt of the Native (*Y.*, Oct.).
Westman, Lolita Ann, Midnight and Music (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Wetjen, Albert Richard, Off Finisterre (*Ad.*, Feb. 15); The Chief of the Loch McCree (*Col.*, Feb. 16); Death on Deck (*S. S.*, July 25).
White, Ared, Orders (*Ev.*, Nov.); The Last Reserve (*Col.*, Feb. 9).
White, Fred M., Icky of Oluk Lake (*Mun.*, Feb.).
White, Stewart Edward, The Morale Artist (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 20).
Whitehead, Henry S., Black Tancrède (*W. T.*, June); Sweet Grass (*W. T.*, July).
Whitfield, Raoul F., Hell's Angel (*Ad.*, Oct. 1); Wild Water (*S. S.*, Oct. 10); Laughing Death (*B. M.*, Feb.); Payload (*S. S.*, Feb. 10).
Whitman, Stephen French, The Far-Away Moon (*C. H.*, Nov.).
Wilds, S., Spell of the East (*Sea*, July).
Wiley, Hugh, Seesaw (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 2); Equity (*Col.*, June 22.)
Wilkinson, Eric H., O Fee (*Sea*, Feb.).
Williams, Ben Ames, The Rich Man's City (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 29); Perennial (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 8); Merrymeeting (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12); A Matter of Business (*S. E. P.*, May 18); Tell It Not in Gath (*S. E. P.*, May 25); A Hind Let Loose (*W. H. C.*, June); The Throwback (*S. E. P.*, June 22).
Wilson, Charles Morrow, Better Folks (*Am. Merc.*, June).
Wilson, Forrest, Green—as in Envy (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Wilstach, John, Queer Money (*D. F.*, Nov. 17).
Winchester, Robert, My Deputy (*B. B.*, Oct.); If You Didn't Love (*R. B.*, Oct.).
Winslow, Horatio, The Call of the Pack (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30); Roll Your Own (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Winsmore, Robert, Concerning Mooney (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 6).
Wirt, W., The Jewel in the Lotus (*S. S.*, Nov. 10).
Wolff, William Almon, Keep Your Eye on the Ball (*Col.*, Nov. 24).
Woodford, Jack, The Detective Who Went Wrong (*R. D. T.*, Apr.-May).
Woodward, Arthur, Gialito Plays Safe (*Ad.*, Nov. 15).

Worts, George F., A Date with a Lady (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10); Pilferage (*B. B.*, Dec.).
Wright, Sewell, Peaslee, The Little Finger of Fate (*Mun.*, Nov.).
Wright, Willard Huntington, The Atonement (*C. T.*, Mch. 10).
Zandtt, Culpepper, Mysteries of To-day (*B. B.*, Feb.).

LIST III

Stories ranking third:

Adams, Bill, The Stewardess (*R.*, Nov.); The Skivvy (*Ad.*, Nov. 1); Pride of Cloth (*Sea*, Apr.); Squareheads (*Sea*, June).
Adams, Frank, Husband in Name Only (*McClure*, Sept.); A Marriage for Convenience (*Smart Set*, Nov.); The Come-On Play (*L.*, Jan. 5); The Moon and Muffins (*R. B.*, May); His Way with Her (*R. B.* July).
Adams, Peter, Nerve (*S. S.*, Jan. 10).
Addington, Sarah, The Soul of a Housekeeper (*D.*, Sept.); It's June in Miami (*W. H. C.*, Nov.); Gay Fellow (*D.*, Dec.); That Game Called Bridge (*D.*, Jan.); These Pioneers (*G. H.*, Apr.); Enchantment (*D.*, May); A Palace in Kingdom Come (*D.*, July).
Akers, Arthur K., He Knows Women (*R. B.*, Sept.); It's Hard to Explain to Ladies (*R. B.*, Nov.); "Don't Mess Wid no Lions" (*R. B.*, Mch.); Samson Collects or Cripples (*R. B.*, June).
Akers, Tom, Still Waters Run Cheap (*A. A.*, Sept. 22).
Aldis, Dorothy, Their Wedding Day (*P. R.*, June).
Aldrich, Bess Streeter, Romance in G Minor (*D.*, Feb.).
Alexander, Elizabeth, Upside Down (*McCall*, July).
Alexander, R. E., The Accusing Voice (*D. F.*, Nov. 10).
Alexander, R. W., Fear (*Ev.*, Dec.).
Alexander, Sandra, Warp of the Years (*C. W.*, Nov.).
Alexander, Sidney, Our Green Shutters (*Y.*, Nov.).
Aley, Maxwell, Watch, Chain and Charm (*D.*, Nov); One Day in Autumn (*McCall*, Nov.).
Allen, Robert L., From the River (*Sea*, May).
Anderson, Frederick Irving, The Recoil (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 23).
Anderson, John, Pilgrimage (*R. B.*, Jan.).
Anderton, Seven, The Ghost of Dan the Fox (*B. B.*, Dec.); The Corpus Delicti (*B. B.*, Jan.) Where There's a Will There's a Fray (*D. F.*, Feb. 16).

Andrews, Mary Raymond, Nothing Fried (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Angell, Pauline K., Miss Virginia (*C. T.*, July 14).
Annixter, Paul, Puck (*L.*, Sept. 29).
Armit, L. P. B., Veali's Shark (*Ev. and R.*, June).
Armstrong, John Gate-Crashers (*Am. Merc.*, Oct.); Goldfish and Tea (*W. S.*, Dec. 20); On the Captain's List (*War*, Jan. 3).
Asbury, Herbert, The Infernal Feminine (*R. B.*, Mch.).
Ashworth, Donna, The Veil of Delusion (*Y.*, Nov.).
Atwater, Adeline L., Men Don't Want Brains (*R. B.*, Oct.).
Augusburg, Paul Deresco, Death Knell (*Mys.*, Jan.).
Avery, Stephen Morehouse, The Lady Who Laughs (*Col.*, Mch., 23); Door Into Eden (*Col.*, Apr. 6); Broken Glasses (*C. H.*, May); Dunholland's Affair (*McCall*, May).
Baily, F. E., Parents Do Count (*Smart Set*, Mch.).
Baldwin, Elizabeth, The Discovery (*Y.*, Oct.).
Baldwin, Faith, Call the Doctor (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.).
Ball, Calvin, The Defective Detective (*B. B.*, Sept.); The Jailbird (*B. B.*, Dec.).
Ball, Eustace Hale, The Old Gray Mouse (*B. M.*, Jan.).
Ballou, Robert O., Her Secret from Him (*R. B.*, Mch.).
Banning, Margaret Culkin, Noël (*Am.*, Dec.); Christmas Lists (*G. H.*, Dec.); Service Entrance (*Smart Set*, Dec.); Robe de Style (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 2); Dinner Guests (*D.*, Apr.); The Deferred Living Plan (*S. E. P.*, June 1).
Barker, Reginald, Raw Gold (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Barker, S. Omar, Hammered Home (*Ad.*, July 1).
Barnard, Leslie Gordon, The Killing Webb (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 24); Mr. Philibus's Christmas Eve (*D. F.*, Dec. 22).
Barretto, Larry, Sacrifice Island (*S. S.*, Apr. 10); Business at the Front (*S. S.*, May 10).
Barrington, G. W., Omeme (*Ev. and R.*, May).
Barry, Beatrice, Selina and the Church (*C. W.*, *June*).
Bartlett, Adeline C., Forgive! (*P. S. M.*, Apr.).
Bartlett, Frederick Orin, Dictated but Not Read (*Smart Set*, Dec.).
Bayley, Donovan, The Man-Trap (*P. S. M.*, Dec.).
Beach, Rex. The Cat Man (*L.*, May 18).
Beames, John, Road Monkeys (*Ev.*, Dec.); Butter (*Ev.*, Feb.); Lawless Land (*Ev. and R.*, June).
Beard, Wolcott Leclear, The Secret of Fishwoman Butte (*S. S.*, Nov. 10).
Beatty, Belle, A Long Time Ago (*Y.*, May).

Bell, J. H., Trial (*Y.*, Feb.).
Bellah, James Warner, What Am I—Fish? (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 9); Brothers in the Bond (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13).
Benedict, Libbian, Caprice Viennois (*Men.*, Mch.).
Benefield, Barry, God's Old Fields (*G. H.*, Dec.).
Benét, Stephen Vincent, Green Christmas (*L. H. J.*, Dec.).
Bennett, James W., Behind the Spirit Screen (*W.*, Nov. 4).
Bennett, James W., and Kwen-Ling Soong, The Stewing Pot Case (*Ad.*, June 1); The Passing of Uncle Joh-On (*Ad.*, June 15).
Bercovici, Konrad, Height (*D.*, Sept.).
Biddle, Craig, Jr., The Queer Duck (*B. S.*, May).
Bisson, Frank, The Devil's Fairway (*Sea*, Apr.); Cumshaw (*Sea*, May).
Bliss, Tip, On the Glorious Fourth (*War*, Jan. 3).
Blochman, L. G., Blossom of Youth (*Ev. and R.*, May).
Booth, Christopher B., Music Hath Clews (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 17); Up in Smoke (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 24); Laughing Justice (*D. S. M.* Feb. 16).
Bott, Leo P. Jr., All Is Not Alimony That Glitters (*L.*, Dec. 29).
Boyce, Burke, The Outcast (*Ev.*, Oct.).
Boyd, Mason, Find the Weapon (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.).
Brace, Blanche, Spite Site (*D.*, Feb.).
Brackett, Charles, Pointed Heels (*C. H.*, Feb.); R& (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Bradford, Roark, The Ha'nt Hound (*Col.*, Apr. 6).
Brady, Mariel, Concert Pitch (*Mys.*, Sept); "All the King's Horses—"(*G. H.*, Apr.).
Bragg, William F., Bill Bailey Goes Home (*T.*, First May No.).
Braley, Berton, According to Formula (*Hol.*, Oct.).
Brandon, Marion, By Candlelight (*Mun.*, Dec.); Gifts of Price (*W.*, Dec. 23).
Brashear, Ellen Lee, Who Is Sylvia? (*Ev. and R.*, May).
Bray, William Donald, The Tryst at Five-Mile Rock (*B. M.*, Mch.)
Brennan, Frederick Hazlitt, Cupid Has a Pie Face (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 1) Too Many Crooks (*R. B.*, Mch.); Dear Alma Mater (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Bretherton, Vivien, Wallflower (*Smart Set*, Feb.); Bird Girl (*G. H.* Mch.); Faunesque (*Smart Set*, Mch.).
Brewster, Kate Lancaster, Youth and Crabbed Age (*P. R.*, July).
Briggs, John, For the Love of Little Pete (*W. S.*, Oct. 20).

Brooks, George S., Very Petty Larceny (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); A Woman's Intuition (*Smart Set*, Mch.).
Brooks, Jonathan, Blackmail (*C. L.*, Dec.); Tails, We Win (*B. B.*, Apr.); Jimmy Takes to the Air (*Y. C.*, July).
Brown, Bernice, Fanny's First Fling (*Col.*, Apr. 20); Holiday (*L. H. J.*, June).
Brown, Guthrie, The Halls of Learning (*Ad.*, Sept. 1); West Portal (*Ad.*, May 15).
Brown, Katharine Holland, The Star Picker (*W. H. C.*, Apr.); Cloth of Silver (*McCall*, May); You Can't Have Everything (*W. H. C.*, June).
Brown, Phyllis Wyatt, The Purple Muffler (*W. H. C.*, Sept.).
Brown, Royal, Who Was Your Grandfather? (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Brown, Seaburn, In the Soup and Fish (*T.*, Sec. Feb. No.).
Browne, Porter Emerson, and Hilton, Joseph, The Land of the Spree (*S. E. P.*, June 15).
Brubaker, Howard, Laughing Matter (*C. G.*, Feb.).
Bruce, George, The Bird Who Jumped (*Ac.*, Sept); Sky Hooters (*Ac.*, Jan.).
Bruess, Floria Howe, Code of the Mounted (*A. A.*, Oct. 20); A Pretty Good Dog (*A. A.*, May 11).
Brush, Katharine, Footlights and Fools (*C. H.*, Mch.).
Buchanan, Madeleine Sharps, Clarence Does His Stuff (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 17).
Buckley, F. R., Be Yourself (*Col.*, June 8).
Bulger, Bozeman, High Hat (*Col.*, May 25).
Burgess, Gelett, The Invisible Girl (*Mun.*, Sept.).
Burks, Arthur J., Hurricane (*Sea*, Apr.); The Bandits of Little Hole (Sea, June).
Burnet, Dana, Third Accident (*Col.*, Jan. 12).
Burrage, A. M., The Box in the Attic (*D. F.*, Feb. 23).
Burt, Katharine Newlin, Little Lucy (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 19); Roaming Cowboy (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.); The Listener (*C. T.*, Mch. 3).
Burtis, Thomson, The Test Flight (*Ad.*, Nov. 1); Two Hours Late with the Mail (*S. S.*, Jan. 25).
Butler, Bret, The Capture of the Yazoo Kid (*Cow.*, First Dec. No.).
Butler, Ellis Parker, The Big Noise (*W. H. C.*, Sept.); Egbert the First (*Am.*, Jan.); A Half Hour about Four (*W. H. C.*, Feb.).
Butler, Mabel Ricker, Aftermath (*Y.*, Oct.).
Caffrey, Andrew A., Then Luck Came In (*Ad.*, Nov. 15); Pursuit (*Ad.*, Apr. 15); To Each Man His Game (*Ad.*, May 15).

Cain, James M., The Taking of Montfauçon (*Am. Merc.*, June).
Campbell, Evelyn, The Back Seat (*C. G.*, Mch.).
Carfrae, Elizabeth, The Lilac Jacket (*L.*, Dec. 15).
Carleton, Warren E., The Boat Share (*A. A.*, Mch. 23).
Carman, Dorothy Walworth, Why Clara Sang (*Hol.*, Jan.).
Carneson, J. S., Captain Canary (*War*, Jan. 17).
Carrington, Elaine Sterne, Chosen of the Lord (*P. R.*, May).
Carse, Robert, The Purple Shirt (*S. S.*, Oct. 25); Steady She Goes (*S. S.*, May 25).
Carson, Sam, Six Furlongs Claiming (*T.*, First Nov. No.).
Carter, Isabel Hopestill, Runaway Horses (*W. H. C.*, Apr.).
Cary, Lucian, No Lady (*Col.*, Oct. 20); The Old Prom Trotter Technique (*C. H.*, Mch.); Fifty Dollars for Norah (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 2); How You Get to Be a Duke (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27).
Case, Robert Ormond, Tamed by Dynamite (*W. S.*, Feb. 16).
Cassidy, Jane, Surprise! Surprise! (*D.*, Oct.).
Castle, Marion, The Woman Hater (*W.*, Nov. 25).
Cautela, Giuseppe, Italian Funeral (*Am. Merc.*, Oct.); The Fur Coat (*P. T.*, May).
Chidester, Helen Daniels, Her Wedding (*P. S. M.*, Apr.).
Childers, James Saxon, Commencement (*C. H.*, July).
Clark, Valma, On Schedule (*D.*, Apr.).
Clarke, Florence Standish, The Two Impostors (*C. W.*, Mch.).
Clausen, Carl, Proof of the Pudding (*Ev.*, Oct.); Illegal Tender (*Col.*, Jan. 12); Wings of Song (*C. T.*, Jan. 27); Dirt Cheap (*A. A.*, Apr. 6).
Coates, Frederick Ames, Mending Crooks (*D. S. M.*, Feb. 16).
Coburn, Walt, A Notched Gun (*Ad.*, Nov. 15); Empty Shells (*Ad.*, Dec. 1); Snow Shackles (*S. S.*, Feb. 25).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, After the Football Was Over (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 23); Up from the Roof (*D.*, Mch.); Dark and Dreary (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27); The Day of Daze (*S. E. P.*, June 1).
Colby, Nathalie S., Just a Boy (*P. R.*, Apr.).
Collison, Wilson, Fidelity (*Y.*, Nov.).
Colter, Eli, Coast of Battle (*Ac.*, May); The One-Shot Kid (*B. S.*, May).
Comfort, Will Levington, The Weed Patch (*Hol.*, May).
Condon, Frank, Man at Work (*Col.*, Jan. 12); A Twosome in Trouble (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 2); The Magic Spade (*Col.*, May 18); A Far Cry (*Col.*, June 1).
Connell, Catherine, The Real Thing (*W. H. C.*, May).

Connell, Richard, The Cross-Eyed South-Paw (*Col.*, Feb. 2); Diamond Ring (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 9); The Solid Gold Article (*Col.*, May 11).
Connor, Glenn A., They Wouldn't Quit (*Cow.*, Sec. Oct. No.); Leave It to Tepee (*Cow.*, First Nov. No.).
Cook, Neil Estes, The Punkett Formation (*Y. C.*, Oct.).
Cooper, Courtney Ryley, Monarch (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27); For It's Always Fair Weather (*L. H. J.*, June); The Squeal of the Sucker (*Col.*, July 13).
Corbett, Elizabeth, The Eighteenth Hole (*McCall*, Sept.).
Corcoran, William, Loyalties (*R.*, Nov.); Manhattan Nocturne (*Ad.*, Apr. 1).
Cram, Mildred, Life Never Happens (*McClure*, Feb.); The Goddess (*Ev. and R.*, June).
Crane, Earl Benham, Signals (*Ad.*, Oct. 15).
Cranston, Claudia, The Blue and the Gray (*G. H.*, June).
Crowell, Chester T., T. N. T. for Two (*McClure*, Mch.); Sam Knowed a Genius (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 16).
Croy, Homer, The Martyr Maker (*Mun.*, Feb.).
Cunningham, Eugene, "Once a Texan—" (*Ac.*, Sept.); The Redhead (*A. A.*, Oct. 13); Notches (*A. A.*, Dec. 22); The Hand of the Master (*Mun.*, Mch.).
Curry, Tom, Crooks in Arcady (*B. M.*, Sept.); The Leak (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.); Supercrook (*B. M.*, Oct.); The Star (*B. M.*, Apr.); Shadow (*S. S.*, Apr. 25); Hard Guys (*R. D. T.*, Apr.-May); The Piker (*R. D. T.*, June-July); Egbert (*B. B.*, May).
Dabney, Clayborne, The Murder at City Hall (*D. F.*, Apr. 13).
Dale, Martin, Safer with Chickens (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 27).
Dangerfield, Clinton, Bitter Waking (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 20).
Darling, Carolyn, The Internal Feminine (*Smart Set*, Jan.).
Davis, Elmer, A Job for the Handy Man (*Col.*, Dec. 29); Good-By, Broadway! (*Col.*, Apr. 27).
Davis, John, Ruth Trent Cries (*Op.*, Jan.).
Day, Holman, Give 'Em Rope (*Pop.*, May 1); Glamor (*Ev. and R.*, July).
Day, Houston, An Error in Judgment (*Sea*, June).
Dealey, Ted, Charged to Advertising (*S. E. P.*, June 22).
De Bra, Lemuel, Black Bob Gets His (*B. B.*, Nov.); The Poison Glass (*B. B.*, Dec.). His Kind of Folks (*B. B.*, May).
De Jeans, Elizabeth, Delivered into His Hands (*R.*, Nov.).

Delano, Edith Barnard, Four Sides to a Triangle (*L. H. J.*, Sept.).
De la Roche, Mazo, Mrs. Meade Savors Life (*R.*, Nov.).
Dellinger, E. S., Air and Orders (*Ad.*, Dec. 15); Crimson Lights (*Ad.*, Jan. 15).
Delmar, Viña, Pick-Up (*R. B.*, Nov.); The Golden Barrier (*Smart Set*, Nov.).
De Polo, Harold, The Secret of Loon Lake (*D. F.*, Apr. 6).
Detzer, Karl W., Nitric John (*Ad.*, June 1).
De Voto, Bernard, Exit Robin Hood (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 29); Our Local Guelphs (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27).
Dickenson, May Freud, Shipwreck (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Dickinson, Weed, The Velo City Wonder (*S. S.*, Apr. 10).
Dickson, Gunnar H., The Sky Masquerador (*War*, Apr. 25).
Dickson, Harris, The Limping Stranger (*C. G.*, Mch.).
Dinsmore, Reg, Toby (*B. B.*, Feb.).
Dockstader, Charlotte, The Coffin of Chan Ling (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 27).
Donovan, Laurence, Mad Mystery Mine (*Mys.*, Sept.); The Cougar Gulch Murder (*Mys.*, Jan.); Fire of Retribution (*A. A.*, Oct. 20); Love at First Flight (*Hol.*, May).
Duganne, Phyllis, The Bridge (*L.*, Sept. 15); Around the Triangle (*Col.*, Dec. 8); For the Good of the Garden (*L.*, Dec. 8); The Opportunist (*L.*, Feb. 9).
Dunn, Violette Kimball, What Could You Expect? (*H. B.*, May).
Du Soe, Bob, The Dead Fight Hard (*S. S.*, May 25).
Dutton, Louise, Mary Is Dead (*G. H.*, Sept.).
Dyer, Louisa A., Salvaged (*C. W.*, Oct.).
Eastman, Rebecca Hooper, The Gentleman Janitor (*G. H.*, Jan.).
Edgar, Day, Beauty Irresistible (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 1); Blind Date (*S. E. P.*, May 11).
Edmonds, Walter D., At Schoharie Crossing (*F.*, June).
Eldridge, Paul Richard, The Butcher Knife Party (*Mun.*, Feb.).
Eliot, Chris, Egan Was Tough (*D. F.*, Jan. 19).
Ellerbe, Alma and Paul, First Aid to Adam's Off Ox (*McCall*, Mch.); Cloudburst (*L.*, June 8).
Ellis, Sophia Wenzel, The Malacca Cane (*R. D. T.*, Apr.-May).
Elston, Allan Vaughan, A Night in Gyp Buttes (*Ad.*, Jan. 1); Redeemed at Par (*A. A.*, Jan. 12); Four Miles an Hour (*R.*, Feb.); The Fugitive (*Ad.*, June 15).
Emery, Robert G., Sacrifice (*W.*, Feb. 10).
Eppley, Louise Rose, Nothing at All (*W.*, Oct. 7).

Erdman, Florence Waring, Christmas Upstairs (*P. S. M.*, Dec.).
Ernst, Paul, Safe and Dependable (*W.*, Sept. 16); The Temple of Serpents (*W. T.*, Oct.).
Erskine, John, The Wooden Horse (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); Peter Kills the Bear (*Col.*, Dec. 1); The Afterthoughts of Lady Godiva (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
Evarts, Hal. G., Post Office at Dry Fork (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 3).
Falkner, Leonard, Revenge with Interest (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 2.).
Farnham, Eleanor Maxwell, Playing (*Y.*, Dec.).
Fennell, Grace Reeve, The Ten Gallon Hat (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Fergusson, Harvey, The Crystal Gazer (*McClure*, Feb.).
Fessier, Charles Winfield, The Blue Devil's Button (*Mun.*, May).
Files, Myron J., Her Son (*Ch.*, Sept.).
Findley, Francine, Grandstand (*Y.*, Oct.); Indispensable (*Y.*, Dec.).
Fishman, Joseph Fulling, The Yawn (*D. F.*, Mch. 16); Old Calamity Stages an Act (*D. F.*, Apr. 6).
Fitzgerald, Edith, Flash (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12); Honey Jackson—in Person (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Fitzgerald, F. Scott, The Perfect Life (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); The Last of the Belles (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 2), Forging Ahead (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30).
Flagg, Francis, The Chemical Brain (*W. T.*, Jan.).
Flanagan, Dorothy Belle, Runaway's Return (*Hol.*, July).
Flynn, T. T., The Sixth Shell (*D. F.*, Nov. 3); The Man Who Judged (*C. T.*, May 12); On the Cob (*Mun.*, June).
Folsom, Elizabeth Irons, Barred Windows (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).
Footner, Hulbert, The Murder at Fernhurst (*A. A.*, Nov. 24).
Ford, Corey, The Queen of St. Nick's (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12).
Ford, Sewell, As to the Newcomb Chin (*W. H. C.*, Jan.).
Ford, T. W., Coyote (*Ac.*, Dec.); Gunshot Grave (*Ac.*, May).
Fort, Garrett, Good Hunting (*Y.*, Apr.).
Fort, Olna Hudler, Annabel (*Y.*, Sept.).
Fowler, Guy, Central Park Wild West (*B. S.*, May).
Fox, Harold W., His Private War (*S. S.*, Feb. 25).
Franklin, George Cory, Skilled Labor (*Cow.*, First Oct. No.); Snow Crazy (*W. S.*, Feb. 16); Halfy Sticks to His Job (*Cow.*, Mch.).
Fraser, Ferrin L., The Invisible Murderer (*R. D. T.*, June-July).
Freebis, Fanny Evelyn, Graduation (*Am. H.*, June 7).
Freedman, David, Lotke's Watch (*P. R.*, Nov.).

Friel, Arthur O., Spiderlegs (*Ad.*, June 15).
Frost, Meigs O., The Hell Ship Admiral (*S. S.*, Apr. 25); The Old Police Combination (*B. B.*, July).
Gardner, Erle Stanley, Crooked Lightning (*D. F.*, Dec. 29); An Artistic Job (*D. F.*, Jan. 19); Bracelets for Two (*B. M.*, Feb.); Just a Suspicion (*D. F.*, Feb. 9); The Painted Decoy (*D. F.*, Feb. 23); A Tip from Scuttle (*D. F.*, Mch. 2); The Dummy Murder (*D. F.*, Mch. 23).
Gaskill, Nat, Friday the Thirteenth (*Sea*, Feb.); Ocean Mail (*Sea*, July).
Gelzer, Jay, Apron Strings (*Col.*, Nov. 17); Solid Ground (*G. H.*, Dec.); This Thing Called Luck (*G. H.*, June).
Gery, R. V., The Yellow Girl (*Ad.*, May 15); Om-Dong (*Ad.*, July 1).
Giddings, Beverly, The Wooing of Aristide Tournillon (*C. G.*, Jan.).
Gilbert, Kenneth, Ol' Goggle-Eyes (*Am. B.*, July); After Midnight (*T.*, First July No.)
Gillespie, Jean, The Magic of Wo Hang (*R.*, Dec.).
Gilpatric, Guy, Scotch and Water (*R. B.*, Feb.); An Old Fool Likes an Old Fool (*Col.*, June 8).
Givens, Colonel, Bricks (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 17); The Pelican (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 9); Jig Time (*S. E. P.*, May 25).
Glass, Montague, You've Got to Keep After 'Em (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).
Glenn, Isa, Tantalus (*H. B.*, July).
Glover, James Waterman, First Oboe (*F.*, Jan.).
Goldberg, Rube, Bridges of Destiny (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
Goldman, Raymond Leslie, The Way to Freedom (*D. F.*, Dec. 22).
Goller, Ralph, "On to Metz" (*War*, Nov. 22).
Goodwyn, Mona March, Temptation (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Gordon, Homer King, Flying Down a Rainbow (*S. S.*, Apr. 10).
Gorman, Kathreen, Pagan (*Y.*, Oct.).
Graeve, Oscar, Pay As You Enter (*P. R.*, Oct.); Barber Shop Blues (*Col.*, Dec. 8); Don't Keep Men Waiting (*Col.*, June 1).
Graham, Arnold, Justice by Proxy (*Mys.*, Sept.).
Graham, Dorothy, Youth (*C. W.*, Nov.).
Gray, Altha, "—And He Shall Have Abundance" (*F.*, Dec.).
Gray, Charles, Wet (*C. L.*, Feb.).
Gray, Peter S., Taps (*Ad.*, June 15).

Greely, John N., Speed (*McClure*, Feb.).
Green, Fitzhugh, Two Turret Wins (*Y. C.*, July).
Green, Walton, Hotsy-Totsy (*L.*, Mch. 30), Return of Edmund Davey (*C. T.*, July 2).
Greene, H. P. S., Peculiar Officers (*Ad.*, May 1); The Fall of Major Span (*Ad.*, June 15).
Grey, Garry, Desire (*W.*, Mch. 31).
Grey, Zane, The Camp Robber (*McCall*, Nov.).
Gross, Milt, "Well, Wot Is It?" (*R. B.*, Feb.).
Guiler, Pollok, Twin Streaks (*S. S.*, May 10).
Gurnee, Odgers T., 14—EE (*L.*, June 1).
Gustin, Marion Bowden, Love or Money (*Y.*, Nov.).
Hadakin, Helen, All in a Day (*W.*, Sept. 9).
Hains, T. Jenkins, On the South Coast (*Sea*, July).
Hall, Gladys, Boy Friends (*Smart Set*, Dec.).
Hall, Holworthy, White Lies (*Smart Set*, Mch.); Song of the Silver Coast (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.); Love on a Farm (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 6); Net Tilt (*C. H.*, May).
Hall, Norman S., Women Understand These Things (*L.* Dec. 29); The Daisy Chain (*L.*, May 11).
Hallet, Richard Matthews, The Tiger's Mouth (*S. E. P.*, May 25).
Hamill, Stuart, Somebody's Shirt (*War*, Jan. 17); "Espry de Squad" (*War*, Feb. 14).
Hanks, Carlos Cramer, The Pay Dreamer (*Mun.*, Nov.).
Hanlon, Brooke, Whoopee!!! (*Mun.*, Dec.); The Call of Spring (*Smart Set*, Feb.); Gardenia (*C. H.*, July).
Hare, Laurance M., The Call Boy (*A. A.*, Oct. 13).
Harriman, E. E., The Devil Horse (*A. A.*, Feb. 9).
Harris, Foster, Feud (*Ad.*, Jan. 15); Payment in Full (*Ad.*, Feb. 15).
Harris, Genevieve, Magic Casements (*Hol.*, June).
Harris, Kennett, Red Skies at Night (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 8); In the Sweat of His Brow (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); Eileen Aroon (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 16); Often Woman Varies (*S. E. P.*, May 4).
Harry, Franklin P., Clean Winds (*Y.*, Sept.).
Hart, Kenneth, Panic (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.).
Hatch, Eric, The Git Thar Stroke (*Col.*, June 29).
Haycox, Ernest, Sevensticks Gamblers (*S. S.*, Oct. 10); Wild Horse Lode (*S. S.*, May 25); The Bandit from Paloma County (*S. S.*, May 10).

Hays, Russell, Gunmen, F. O. B. (*S. S.*, Feb. 25); Through the Blinds (*S. S.*, May 10).

Heath, Eric, The Finishing Touch (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.); The Concert (*Hol.*, Nov.); A Bottle of Romance (*A. A.*, Nov. 10); Biggs, Bum, and Squinty, Ltd. (*A. A.*, Dec. 29); The Frame-Up (*A. A.*, Apr. 20).

Hellman, Sam, She Had No Luck, Either (*R. B.*, Nov.); Offside (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 10); "I Never Miss!" (*R. B.*, Feb.); Leap Clear! (*R. B.*, June).

Hershey, Burnet, His Best Suit of Clothes (*B. S.*, Apr.).

Hillman, Gordon, Open Throttle (*B. S.*, Mch.).

Hilton, Francis W., Purple Loco (*Cow.*, First Nov. No.) The Spinner (*Cow.*, Jan.); The Discard Herd (*Cow.*, Apr.).

Hinds, Roy W., The Other Way Around (*Col.*, Jan. 19).

Hopkins, Frederick, The Scrimshaw (*Ad.*, July 1).

Hopkins, Tom J., The Fighting Marshal (*T.*, Sec. Nov. No.).

Hopper, James, The Divided Balcony (*D.*, Dec.).

Hopper, Lieut. John, The Fighting Irish (*A. A.*, Nov. 10); Corporal Santa Claus (*A. A.*, Dec. 29).

Horn, R. de S., The Navy Takes a Walk (*War*, Mch.).

Houston, Margaret Belle, The Patio of the Red Rose (*P. R.*, Apr.).

Hughes, Elizabeth Burgess, Restless as the Sea (*Y.*, Mch.).

Hughes, Rupert, A Nightingale Flies Home (*H. I. and C.*, June).

Hunt, Stranger, Bird of Panic (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 24).

Hunter, Rosamond, "And Every Fourth Year" (*P.*, Oct.).

Hurst, Fannie, Sissy (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.).

Huse, Harry G., Bald Butte or Bust (*Ad.*, Mch. 1).

Huston, McCready, The Blue Handkerchief (*C. H.*, June.)

Ind, Allison W., Bridge Going Out (*B. B.*, May).

Irwin, Inez Haynes, Masks (*W. H. C.*, Sept.).

Irwin, Wallace, Don't Carry Firearms (*W. H. C.*, June).

Jackson, Charles Tenney, Brood of the Eagle (*Ad.*, Sept. 1); Watch Mates (*S. S.*, Apr. 25); The Big Boss from Bimini (*S. S.*, May 10); Mary Queen o' Scotch (*S. S.*, June 10).

Jacobs, Allen S., Hard-Boiled Soft (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.).

Jacot, B. L., Half a Brick for Henry (*L.*, Feb. 16).

Janis, Elsie, Pipe Down! (*R. B.*, Nov.).

Janis, Elsie, and Markey, Gene, Gold Derby (*R. B.*, Feb.).

Jensen, Oscar E., Montana Man (*Ev.*, Nov.); Hornet (*Ad.*, May 1).

Johnson, Nunnally, Simple Honors (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 22).

Johnson, Roland, The Burial of Dave Pett (*D. F.*, May 4).

Johnson, W. Ryerson, Rattler Prowler (*Ad.*, May 15); Some Battered but Safe (*Ad.*, June 15).
Johnston, Calvin, The Day of the Black Dog (*Pop.*, Sept. 20).
Johnston, J. R., The Fight in Paradise Valley (*Cow.*, Sec. Nov. No.); King of the Wild (*Cow.*, Feb.).
Johnston, Mary, The Angel (*L. H. J.*, Jan.).
Johnston, Ralph Hubert, The Red Arrow (*Ad.*, May 15).
Jones, Davis, Murder at the Front (*S. S.*, July 25).
Jones, John Paul, The Lone Trail (*Ac.*, Mch.).
Jones, Nard, The Song Is Ended (*Y.*, Nov.).
Jones, Stanley, High Life (*R.*, Mch.); Sanctuary (*Hol.*, May).
Jorgensen, Nels Leroy, Gambling in Yelloe (*B. M.*, May).
Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Contrast (*L. H. J.*, Nov.); Sugar Boy (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12); Emeritus (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 6); Just a Believer (*Col.*, July 20).
Kallenbach, Marie Schulte, An Unconditional Surrender (*C. W.*, Apr.).
Kauffman, Reginald Wright, Birds of Passage (*Hol.*, Jan.).
Kauffman, Ruth Wright, April Showers (*Hol.*, Apr.).
Kelland, Clarence Budington, Two Minutes to Play (*Col.*, Dec. 1); Beyond the Threshold (*C. G.*, Feb.); "Every Silver Mine Has Got Its Cloudy Linin'" (*Am.*, Mch.); A Will and a Way (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 2); Bait of Falsehood (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13); Scattergood Encounters Broadway (*Am.*, May); Then Came Ladies (*L. H. J.*, July).
Kempton, Kenneth Payson, Whipping Blades (*Am. B.*, July).
Kennedy, John B., The Third Slip (*Col.*, Nov. 17); The Invitation (*Col.*, June 22).
Kerby, Parker, Three of a Kind (*R.*, Nov.).
Kerr, Sophie, All You Need Is a Cookbook (*L. H. J.*, Dec.); "Yes, Sir; Thank You, Sir" (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5).
Kilbourne, Fannie, Fantasy End (*L. H. J.*, Sept.); Pretend He's the Plumber (*L. H. J.*, Jan.); Everything Has Its Price (*Am.*, Apr.); The Sins of the Fathers (*Am.*, June).
King, Beulah, The Indian Merchant (*W.*, Oct. 21).
King, Ethel, The Turncoat (*C. W.*, Dec.).
King, Frank, Death on the 8:45 (*D. F.*, Apr. 13).
Kitchel, Kelsey P., Fog (*Ad.*, May 15).
Knibbs, Henry Herbert, They Tried to Frame Yardlaw (*S. S.*, July 25).
Knight, Adele Ferguson, The Lovely Gentleman (*Hol.*, Oct.).

Knight, Ralph, Boobs in the Woods (*T.*, First Jan. No.).
Krebs, Roland, Dough Head (*D. S. M.*, Nov. 24); The Loaf and the Fish (*Hol.*, Mch.); To the Dogs and Back (*C. H.*, May).
Kummer, Frederick Arnold, The Right Angle of the Triangle (*Smart Set*, Feb.).
Kyne, Peter B., Getaway Day (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); The Mud-Lark (*H. I. and C.*, Dec.); Old Sniff (*Col.* Jan. 5); Lionized (*Am.*, July); Deadlier than the Male (*H. I. and C.*, July).
La Mar, Bud, The Pleasantville Rodeo (*B. B.*, Oct.)
Lamb, Harold, Child of the Dragon (*Ev. and R.*, June); The Iron Man Rides (*Ad.*, June 1).
Lambertson, Louise, The Woman Who Never Was (*C.*, May).
Lane, Rose Wilder, One Thing in Common (*L. H. J.*, Sept.).
Lardner, Ring W., Absent-Minded Beggar (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
La Roe, C. Warden, Batting for Braines (*C. L.*, Oct.).
Larsson, Genevieve, The City of Lost Souls (*W. T.*, Oct.).
Lauriston, Victor, The Old Dog Knows (*T.*, First Jan. No.); William James Ramsay's Grave (*Mys.* Mch.).
Lea, Fanny Heaslip, Beside the Shalimar (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 3); Ghost Gifts (*S. E. P.*, June 1).
Lee, Leo, Horse Sense (*A. A.*, Sept. 15).
Le Gallienne, Richard, The Smile That Meant Paradise (*H. B.*, Sept.).
Le May, Alan, The Loan of a Gun (*Col.*, Feb. 23).
Lengel, William C., A One Way Trip (*McClure*, Sept.); Lonely Man in Town (*McClure*, Dec.).
Leonard, Edward, Too Strong to Break (*W. S.*, Oct. 20).
Levenson, Lew, He Loved Flowers (*H. I. and C.*, Dec.).
Leverage, Henry, Flying Double (*B. S.*, May).
Lewis, Sinclair, There Was a Prince (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Liggett, Walter, At the End of the Rainbow (*D. F.*, Dec. 15).
Lincoln, Joseph C., The Cure (*L. H. J.*, Dec.).
Linklater, J. Lane, The Double Alibi (*D. F.*, Feb. 16); The Captain's Pajamas (*D. F.*, Mch. 23); Midnight Murder (*R. D. T.*, June-July); Dynamite (*A. A.*, May 4).
Livingston, Florence Bingham, In Spite of the Family (*Hol.*, Feb.).
Livingston, Ruby Erwin, The Jungle Cat (*Ev.*, Dec.).
Lloyd, Nelson, The Broadcasted Author (*Scr.*, Nov.).
Loya, Lupe, The Tree of Destiny (*A. A.*, Dec. 29).
Luhrs, Marie, Impresario (*Am. H.*, Mch. 15).
Luther, Mark Lee, Nude Stockings (*L.*, July 13).

Lyle, Eugene P. Jr., That Cork Oak (*Ev. and R.*, May).
MacAlarney, Robert Emmet, Wings of the Morning (*McCall*, Dec.); The Blue Roadster (*McCall*, Apr.).
McAllister, Francis, World of Whispers (*Mun.*, May).
McCallum, Mella Russell, Sate at Home (*Ev. and R.*, July).
McCutcheon, George Barr, The Stolen Fortnight (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
MacDonald, William Colt, Rawhide (*Cow.*, Sec. Oct. No.).
MacDowd, Kennie, Lottery Tickets (*B. M.*, Nov.).
McFarlane, Leslie, Fuzzy (*S. S.*, Nov. 10); Adventure of the Cork-Tipped Cigarettes (*R. D. T.*, June-July).
McGrew, Don, Kismet in Picardy (*S. S.*, Dec. 10).
MacIsaac, Fred, She Knew What She Wanted (*L.*, Nov. 3); The Sole Survivor (*L.*, Apr. 27); Wanted—An American (*Pop.*, First Apr. No.).
McKenna, Edward L., Hungarian Rhapsody (*W.*, Jan. 20).
MacKenzie, Faith Compton, The Angle of Error (*Book.*, May).
McMillan, Neil T., Camel Nature (*Ev.*, Jan.).
McMorrow, Thomas, For Good Old Towle (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13); The Passenger from Pacific (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 1); We Visit Foreign Parts (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30); The Good Old Graft (*S. E. P.*, May 18).
McMorrow, Will, Midsummer Nightmare (*Pop.*, May 1).
McNutt, William Slavens, Bank Roll for Belmont (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 9); The Big Shot (*S. E. P.*, June 15.)
Mabie, Louise Kennedy, Almost Cozy (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 29); The Catnip Mouse (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 2).
Mack, Thomas, The Magic Rube (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.); The Telltale Thousand (*D. F.*, Apr. 27); The Weight of Evidence (*D. F.*, May 18).
Malone, Edmund Arthur, "All I Needs Is a Dollar" (*Pop.*, First Apr. No.).
March, Ivan, Castaways of the Air (*Mun.*, Oct.); The Sky-Writers (*S. S.*, Jan. 25).
Markey, Gene, Playboy (*R. B.*, June.)
Marmur, Jacland, Blood or Steam (*S. S.*, May 25).
Marquis, Don, The Right Knife (*L.*, Feb. 16).
Marsh, Howard R., The Humdinger Detective (*Ev.*, Oct.).
Martin, Carl L., Still Buzzards (*B. M.*, Feb.).
Martin, E. G., Flat Feet, (*Sea*, Jan.).
Martin, Nell, The Lie That Binds (*A. A.*, Sept. 15).

Martin, Thornton W., The Great System (*S. E. P.*, May 18).
Marx, Hortense Zepler, Types (*Am. H.*, May 3).
Mathes, Hodge, White Mule (*Mun.*, May).
Maxwell, Cliff, The Gods Take Toll (*Mys.*, Sept.); Red (*Scr.*, Jan.).
Maxwell, Elinor, A Bid in Diamonds (*P. S. M.*, Jan.).
Means, E. K., The Faith Healer (*Mun.*, Sept.); Saving Sinners (*Mun.*, Oct.); Music Money (*Mun.*, Nov.); Uplift of Sugar (*Mun.*, Feb.); Author, Author! (*Mun.*, May).
Mercein, Eleanor, In Heaven a Little Window (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 6).
Merryman, Mildred Plew, Tessie (*W.*, Feb. 3).
Merwin, Samuel, No Mother to Guide Her (*Col.*, Jan. 19); Mister Sam (*Col.*, Mch. 30).
Meyers, Alfred Louis, The Courtship of Laura Calendor (*C. W.*, Jan.).
Michener, Elliott W., and Laird, Jack, Honest an' Upright Men (*S. S.*, Oct. 25).
Millar, Ronald, Sweet and Lowdown (*L.*, Sept. 15).
Miller, Alice Duer, Corinna Does a Kind Deed (*W. H. C.*, Jan.).
Miller, Dorothy, Nice Little Thing (*Smart Set*, Nov.).
Miller, Franklin P., Debt of the Legion (*Ac.*, Apr.).
Miller, Helen Topping, Road Work (*Hol.*, July); Lizard Skin (*Hol.*, (May).
Miller, Jil, Boy (*P. T.*, June).
Miller, Neil, Father Was Right (*Y.*, Nov.).
Miller, Warren Hastings, The Key of the Water Kegs (*Am. B.*, July).
Milton, Paul K., Secret Justice (*B. S.*, Apr.).
Minnigerode, Meade, Racing Luck (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Mintzer, L. Murney, Survival (*Ev.*, Nov.); The Armed Guard (*Ev.*, Feb.); Battle Stations (*Sea*, Apr.); Counterattack (*Sea*, May).
Mish, Charlotte, To the Last (*Y.*, Mch.); At First Sight (*Y.*, July).
Mitchell, Ruth Comfort, The Island of Peace (*W. H. C.*, Dec.).
Montanye, C. S., Winning Ways (*T.*, Sec. Nov. No.); The Sea (*Y.*, Dec.); Slaves of Love (*Y.*, Mch.).
Montanye, Harold, The Baby of the Boswell Line (*A. A.*, Feb. 16).
Montross, Lynn, Judith and the Empress (*C. G.*, Feb.).
Montross, Lynn and Lois, Take Love for Instance (*C. H.*, Sept.); Learn About Women (*C. H.*, Jan.); Young Lochinvar (*C. H.*, Jan.); The Slick and the Dead (*C. H.*, Dec.); The Cat's Pajamas (*C. H.*, Feb.); The Class of 1920 (*C. H.*, Feb.).

Mooney, Ralph E., Henery Has a Terrible Day (*Mun.*, June).
Moore, John Trotwood, Those Walker Hounds of Mine (*C. G.*, Nov.).
Moravsky, Maria, Laughter (*R.*, Dec.); The Crimson Ribbon (*Ev. and R.*, July).
Morgan, Bassett, Tapa (*R.*, Nov.,); Bimini (*W. T.*, Jan.); Moon Calf (*A. A.*, Apr. 27).
Morgan, Howard E., Bear Justice (*Cow.*, Sec. Nov. No.); Dizzy Fingers (*D. S. M.*, Feb. 16), Scar Rawlins, Lifer (*A. A.*, Mch. 30).
Morris, Gouverneur, He Learned About Women from *Him* (*H. I. and C.*, Oct.).
Moses, Kingsley, The Navigator (*Sea*, Jan.).
Mundy, Talbot, The Wheel of Destiny (*Ad.*, Nov. 1); The Big League Miracle (*Ad.*, Nov. 15).
Munyan, Arthur T., Valor (*L. H. J.*, Sept.); The Valley of the Shadow (*L. H. J.*, Feb.); Musical Sawdust (*C. H.*, June); A Ring from London (*L. H. J.*, July); Fire-Bird (*L.*, June 22).
Myers, Cleve, Ticks (*Cow.*, First Oct. No.).
Myers, O. B., The Buzzard's Guest (*War*, Jan. 31).
Mygatt, Gerald, Park Avenue (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30); The Wishing Window (*McCall*, July).
Nalence, E. L., Bamboo War (*A. A.*, May 18).
Nason, Leonard H., Thanksgiving Eve (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 22); Double-Header (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 17); Mines Aft (*S. E. P.*, May 11).
Neidig, William J., The Cactus Eaters (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 1).
Nichols, Robert H. H., Weather Signals (*Sea*, May).
Niven, Frederick, Lo, the Poor Indian (*Ev.*, Sept.); Coal Oil—Beverage (*Pop.*, Sept. 20).
Norris, Kathleen, A Man Who Was Shy (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.).
Norton, Roy, The Ward of the Strangler (*B. B.*, Sept.).
Oblinger, M. M., Red Snows of Russia (*War*, Jan. 3).
O'Brien, William, The Knot (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Olds, N. S., A Letter to Mr. Epstein (*Scr.*, Apr.).
Oliphant, Ronald, The Cop and the Canary (*Pop.*, Sept. 20).
Oliver, Jennie Harris, Blue Flax (*G. H.*, May); Golden Windows (*Hol.*, July).
O'Neill, Rose, The Hired Man (*G. H.*, June).
Outerson, Captain William, Round the Horn (*All.*, June).
Overton, Clara Wallace, Plenty of Hats (*McCall*, June).

Owen, Edward, The Messenger (*Mys.*, Mch.).
Palmer, Stuart, A Smooth Racket (*B. S.*, June).
Paradise, Viola, Revolt in the Zodiac (*Col.*, Jan. 26).
Parker, Austin, The Cynical Mr. Tyne (*C. T.*, Jan. 13); He Got Annoyed (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 2); Angela (*S. E. P.*, June 22).
Parker, Maude, Crime Passionel (*L.*, Apr. 27).
Parmenter, Christine Whiting, Depths Unsounded (*C. W.*, May).
Partin, Agnes Edwards, A Matter of Temperature (*W.*, Mch. 24).
Partridge, Emory, Sanctuary (*Y.*, Nov.).
Patterson, Norma, Ghosts (*G. H.*, Sept.); Flight (*G. H.*, Nov.); A Voice Calling (*G. H.*, Dec.); The Lost Legion (*G. H.*, Jan.); Treasure (*G. H.*, June).
Pattullo, George, The Dimwits (*S. E. P.*, Nov. 24).
Paul, Nina Howard, A Run-in on Freedom (*Hol.*, Mch.).
Payne, Elizabeth Stancy, Mother Comes Home for Christmas (*C. G.*, Dec.).
Payne, Stephen, A Mess of Stew (*A. A.*, Oct. 6).
Payne, Will, The Cashier's Secret (*Col.*, Mch. 2.)
Paynter, Ernest, Shipmates (*Ev.*, Jan.).; Cabaret Cherry (*B. S.*, Feb.); Fists Across the Sea (*Sea*, May).
Pearsall, Robert J., Agents of Progress (*A. A.*, May 25).
Peattie, Louise Redfield, Coggy Plays Knight Errant (*P. S. M.*, Dec.).
Peery, Robert, That Bum from Mott Street (*War*, Mch. 14).
Pelley, William Dudley, The Man Who Lived in Eternity Now! (*Am.*, Dec.); The Higher Summons (*Am.*, May); "Life Is to Find Out" (*Am.*, June).
Pendarves, G. G., The Laughing Thing (*W. T.*, May).
Pendexter, Hugh, Prairie War (*Mun.*, May).
Penrose, Bernard Lee, On with the Show (*T.*, Sec. Nov. No.).
Perkins, Kenneth, The Trail of Skulls (*S. S.*, Oct. 25).
Perry, Clay, Retribution (*A. A.*, Dec. 1); Two-Way Trail (*Pop.*, May 1).
Perry, Jennings, Hero for Hire (*McClure*, Mch.); Captain's Choice (*Sea*, July).
Perry, Peter, Luck (*D. F.*, Sept. 29); The Riddle Man (*D. F.*, Oct. 6); Checkmate (*D. F.*, Dec. 1); The Nicked Blade (*D. F.*, Dec. 22); The Flapper Forger (*R. D. T.*, Mch.).
Perry, Ralph R., Gale's Aftermath (*A. A.*, Feb. 2).
Petersen, Elizabeth Benneche, The Silver Bracelet (*G. H.* May); The Lass Who Followed a Gypsy (*G. H.*, July).

Phelps, Carrington, The Showdown (*L.*, Sept. 1).
Phelps, John Dudley, They Kissed a Goat (*War*, Apr. 25).
Phillips, Ernie, That Busher on Third (*S. S.*, July 25).
Phillips, Henry Wallace, Bad Lands (*L.*, Jan. 19).
Pierce, Elwood F., Left Foot First (*Ev.*, Sept.).
Pierce, Frank Richardson, Trial by Ordeal (*Ad.*, Dec. 1).
Pinkerton, Robert E., By the Tide (*D. F.*, Mch. 9); Two Men and the Westward (*S. S.*, Mch. 25).
Piper, Edgar Eugene, Sergeant Cognac (*War*, Feb. 28).
Pitney, A. De Ford, Call This Marriage? (*R. B.*, Nov.); The Boost (*R. B.*, Dec.); The Squaw Man (*R. B.*, June).
Pitt, Chart, The Devil's Deputy (*R. B. S.*, Dec.); Master of Mutiny (*Ac.*, Feb.); Wreckage (*Hol.*, June).
Plum, Mark, The Hatpin (*Mys.*, Mch.).
Portor, Laura Spencer, Pearl of Pearls (*W. H. C.*, Apr.).
Post, Melville Davisson, The Mark on the Window (*Am.*, Apr.).
Preble, John N., The Wildcat's Playmate (*A. A.*, Apr. 27).
Presnell, Robert R., Fifty-Fifty (*C. T.*, June 30).
Price, E. Hoffman, The Girl from Samarcand (*W. T.*, May).
Putnam, Nina Wilcox, "What a Whoopee!" (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 26); Love Cannot Die (*H. B.*, May).
Quinn, Seabury, The House of Golden Masks (*W. T.*, June).
Radikin, Earle E., "That's Regulations" (*War*, Jan. 3).
Raht, Carlysle, The Sleep Faker (*S. S.*, Jan. 25).
Raine, Norman Reilly, Dr. Lamartaine's Wife (*Ev. and R.*, June).
Ralston, Kerry, Dammed Up Death (*S. S.*, Oct. 25); Little Grains of Sand (*S. S.*, Jan. 25).
Reck, Franklin M., "Schlachter!" (*Am. B.*, July).
Reeve, Arthur B., Radiant Doom (*D. F.*, Oct. 6); Craig Kennedy Splits Hairs (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 27); Craig Kennedy's Christmas Case (*D. F.*, Dec. 22); The Beauty Wrecker (*D. F.*, Mch. 16).
Reuter, David, The Road (*J. F.*, Jan.).
Reynard, Lester, Don't Call It Air-Tight (*B. M.*, Nov.).
Reynolds, John Murray, The Devil-Plant (*W. T.*, Sept.).
Richards, Cole, "Now, What Noise?" (*War*, Oct. 25); "It Was This Way—" (*War*, Jan. 31); Snoopy (*Mys.*, Feb); Hangman's Brand (*Ac.*, Apr.).
Richardson, Gladwell, The Jerry Picker (*War*, Jan. 3).
Richmond, Don, Chevrons for Cockeye (*War*, Apr. 11).
Ridenour, Ruth, Tuxedo (*Smart Set*, Mch.).

Ripley, Clements, The Man for the Job (*Ev.*, Dec.); That's Business (*Ad.*, Mch. 15).
Roan, Tom, Heart Strings (*S. S.*, Oct. 25).
Roberts, Elvira P., By the Cheyenne (*Ev. and R.*, June).
Robertson, O. A., The Holdup at Hanover (*S. S.*, Oct. 25).
Robins, Nelson, Old Judge Lynch (*D. F.*, Oct. 6).
Robinson, Albert, Framed (*W.*, Sept. 23).
Robinson, Henry Morton, Charley Boyle (*C.*, Mch.).
Robinson, Lee, The Spirit of the Corps (*S. S.*, Jan. 10); Eyeteeth (*S. S.*, Mch. 25).
Roche, Arthur Somers, The Unbearable Touch (*Col.*, Sept.); The Third Degree (*Col.*, Dec. 8); A Happy Ending (*L.*, Feb. 23).
Rockwell, C. M., Mr. Windle's Swindle (*Clues*, Sec. Sept. No.).
Roe, Vingie E., Sky Wind (*McClure*, Mch.); The Law of the Hinterlands (*L.*, June 1).
Rogers, Lillian, Gift of the Gods (*W. H. C.*, Feb.).
Rohde, Robert H., Sonny Gets the Sack (*S. S.*, Oct. 10); The Trespassing Typist (*D. F.*, Mch. 9).
Roscoe, Theodore, Dead Men's Ears (*Ac.*, Dec.); Creeron Cracks Wise (*A. A.*, Feb. 9); The Gold God Laughs (*A. A.*, Feb. 23); Reward (*Ac.*, Mch.).
Rosenberg, Charles R., Jr., Skirts Made Trouble (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 20).
Rotch, Francis, A Flyer in Oil (*Sea*, Feb.).
Rouse, William Merriam, The Blockade (*Ev.*, Sept.); The "Old Maid" of Dunder Falls (*Mun.*, Sept.); The Timid Dog (*Hol.*, May).
Rowan, Richard Wilmer, Dead Reckoning (*Mys.*, Feb.).
Rowland, Henry C., A Ward of Mrs. Lee (*C. T.*, June 9).
Rowland, John T., Storm Wraith (*Sea*, Feb.); Dakaree (*Sea*, Apr.); In the Scotia Ice (*Sea*, May).
Rud, Anthony M., Larrimore of Lonesome (*Ev.*, Feb.).
Runyon, Damon, Romance in the Roaring Forties (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Russell, Alice Dyar, High Trails (*Am. G.*, July).
Ryan, Stella, A Palm for Victory (*G. H.*, Apr.); Now That It's Spring (*P. R.*, Apr.).
St. Johns, Adela Rogers, and Hyland, Dick, A Matter of Conversation (*C. H.*, Dec.).
Sabastian, Inez, Puzzles (*L.*, June 15).
Sangster, Margaret E., The Hem of His Garment (*G. H.*, Apr.); Pretty (*Hol.*, July).

Sapin, Ruth, Debut (*W. H. C.*, Feb.).
Sar, H. Stewart, Trail Tang (*L.*, Dec. 29).
Sass, Herbert Ravenel, Dragonhead (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8).
Saturen, Eve, If Words Fail (*Am. H.*, Nov. 2); Simple Simon (*Am. H.*, Apr.).
Say, Harold Bradley, Dessert (*A. A.*, June 29).
Scammell, J. M., Typhoon's Talama (*Sea*, Jan.).
Scholz, Jackson, Forty-three Fifty-two (*Mun.*, Nov.); The Toast of the Turtle Doves (*S. S.*, June 10).
Scobee, Barry, Noisy Night (*S. S.*, Sept. 25); Vengeance on Jimber Jaw (*S. S.*, Oct. 10); Flies to the Honeypot (*S. S.*, Nov. 10); Black Yankee (*Ad.*, Mch. 15); The Sixth Shot (*S. S.*, May 25); Pay-Day (*S. S.*, June 25).
Scott, Earl W., and Marion, An Hour before Dawn (*B. M.*, Sept.); Curtains for Porky (B. M., Dec.); Brewed at Benetti's (*B. M.*, Feb.); Gat Grabs the Shadow (*B. M.*, May).
Scott, Marion, Poison Enters the Manse (*B. M.*, Jan.).
Scott, Evelyn, The Adversary (*Men.*, Jan.).
Scott, Leroy, The Langdon Mystery (*McClure*, Oct.).
Scoville, Radcliffe, Sea Mist (*W.*, Jan. 6).
Seifert, Shirley, Sweet Villainy (*C. T.*, Apr. 14).
Serwer, Harry, Net—No Discount (*P. T.*, June.)
Shafer, Don Cameron, Black Shadow (*Mun.*, Sept.); Winged Death (*Mun.*, Dec.); The Ill Wind (*Mun.*, May).
Shands, A. L., Memory (*Y.*, Oct.).
Shane, Nevis, The 3 Darlings (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.); A Taste for Red (*Col.*, May 18); 10th Anniversary (*H. I. and C.*, June).
Shannon, Mary, The Pulse of the Great Lone Land (*S. F.*, Dec.).
Shea, Grace Lewis, A Vice of the Virtuous (*C. W.*, Apr.).
Sherman, L. R., South of the Border (*Ace*, Sec. Dec. No.); The Feud about Melisse (*B. S.*, Feb.).
Shumway, Harry Irving, It All Depends (*Mun.*, Dec.).
Shurtleff, Bertrand L., Sometime—Ashore (*S. S.*, Jan. 10); Nig Jim (*S. S.*, June 25).
Shute, Henry A., The Grab Bag Grabs Everything in Sight (*S. E. P.*, Sept. 8.)
Sinclair, Bertrand W., Buck Ripley's Slide (*Ad.*, Oct. 15).
Singer, Mary, Side-Tracked (*Am.*, Mch.).
Singmaster, Elsie, The Bathing Beauty (*Col.*, Dec. 22).
Slocum, Robert A., Racing Blood (*A. A.*, Dec. 22).

Small, Sidney Herschel, The Porcelain of Great Price (*Ad.*, Jan. 1); Crimson Silk (*Ad.*, Mch. 1); The Fool of Torture (*S. S.*, July 10).

Smith, A. de Herries, Ice Cavalry (*T.*, First Nov. No.); Kill! Comrades, Kill! (*S. S.*, July 25).

Smith, Garret, A Punch in an Alibi (*D. F.*, Oct. 27); Behind the Time Lock (*D. F.*, Jan. 12).

Smith, Leonard K., Assault with Intent to Kill (*Ad.*, June 15).

Smith, Maxwell, Racket (*D. F.*, Jan. 26); Tanglefoot (*D. F.*, Feb. 2); Stubbed (*D. F.*, Feb. 16); Skinned (*D. F.*, Apr. 20).

Smith, Wallace, Trigger Freed! (*H. I. and C.*, Jan.); Strictly Business (*H. I. and C.*, Apr.).

Sneddon, Robert W., The Signpost (*D. F.*, Nov. 24).

Snow, Irving Cushman, Rodeo Ringers (*A. A.*, Oct. 13).

Snyder, Alexander, Co-operative (*W.*, Sept. 30).

Somerville, A. W., No Brakes (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 8).

Spears, Raymond S., Joe-Ed Rides to Kill (*B. B.*, Oct.); Scienterific (*Ev.*, Oct.); Softpaw (*Ad.*, Mch. 1); The Gunstore Rat (*Ad.*, Apr. 1); Old Mississipp (*Ev. and R.*, May); A Bad Element in Feathers (*Ad.*, July 1); A Bad Man (*Ad.*, July 15).

Springs, Elliott White, Babes in the Woods (*L.*, Feb. 9); Women Are Just Toys (*R. B.*, Mch.); A Scar of Battle, (*L.*, Apr. 27); The Steeplechase Pier (*L.*, June 1).

Squier, Emma-Lindsay, The City of Golden Doom (*G. H.*, Jan.); The Pride of Dona Beatriz (*G. H.*, May); Old Man Duendy (*G. H.*, July).

Stallings, Laurence, Lover's Leap (*L.*, Apr. 6).

Standish, Burt L., Dark Trickery (*T.*, Sec. Nov. No.).

Stanley, Imogene and Doherty, Edward, Sob Story (*L.*, June 15).

Stanley, May, Home-Coming (*P. R.*, Jan.).

Starrett, Vincent, The Ace of Clubs (*P. R.*, Mch.); Footsteps (*R. D. T.*, Mch.).

Stead, Berkham, A Fine Mess (*Y.*, Feb.)

Stentor, Guy, Kindred Souls (*B. S.*, Feb.); From the Bottom—Up (*B. S.*, May).

Stevens, James, The Grip of Life (*Ad.*, Sept. 15).

Stone, Elinore Cowan, The Making of a Journalist (*W. H. C.*, Mch.); An Heir for the Ortegas (*Hol.*, Apr.); Smoke (*G. H.*, July).

Stribling, T. S., The Etching (*R.*, Nov.); A Pearl at Pampatar (*Ad.*, June 1); The Thousandth Minaret (*Ev. and R.*, July).

Styron, Arthur, Ten Days Out (*War*, June 20).
Sullivan, A. M., Wings for an Eagle (*P. S. M.*, Nov.).
Sutherland, H. M., The Grandstander (*Ev.*, Feb.).
Swain, John D., Guess My Weight! (*A. A.*, Dec. 22).
Synon, Mary, Good Trouper (*L. H. J.*, Sept.); Cuckoo's Nest (*McCall*, Mch.).
Taber, Elizabeth Stead, News from Sandy (*W. H. C.*, Feb.).
Taylor, Basil B., Tangled Wire (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Taylor, Katharine Haviland, Give 'Em What They Want (*Smart Set*, Jan.); The Great Delmar (*Hol.*, June).
Terhune, Albert Payson, Changelings (*R. B.*, Dec.); Galahad (*Am.* Mch.); The Varmint (*R. B.*, Mch.); Cowards Both! (*C. G.*, Apr.).
Test, H. C., A Comical Fade-Out (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 23).
Thacher, W. F. G., Trainin' Table Blues (*B. B.*, Nov.).
Thomas, Elizabeth Finley, Erda (*H. B.*, Jan.); The Valley of Silence (*C.*, Nov.).
Thomas, Martha Banning, Square Deal Sweeney (*Hol.*, Feb.).
Thompson, Don H., Prodigal Stars (*D. F.*, Mch. 30).
Thompson, John A., The Devil's Claw-Marks (*Y.*, Nov.); Fireman's Luck (*A. A.*, May 25).
Thompson, John H., Shorty Returns (*A. A.*, Jan. 19).
Thursday, Thomas, Competition Is the Strife of Trade (*A. A.*, Oct. 6); And Howe! (*Ev.*, Feb.).
Tibby, Benjamin F., Under the Coldwaters (*Cow.*, Sec. Oct. No.).
Tiernan, John F., Second Day Party (*D. F.*, Feb. 16).
Tillman, Frances, La Petite Maudesse (*Hol.*, Mch.).
Tinee, Mae, Libel (*L.*, Feb. 2); Front Page Fanny (*L.*, Mch. 23).
Tisdale, Frederick, Triumph (*L.*, June 29).
Titus, Harold, Looker-After (*C. G.*, July).
Tompkins, Juliet Wilbor, A Stout Little House (*C. G.*, June).
Toohey, John Peter, The Great Lover (*Smart Set*, Nov.).
Topham, Thomas, Not Exactly a Pinch (*Clues*, First Sept. No.); Three Curious Burglars (*D. F.*, Nov. 17); The Mystery of the Cook's Necklace (*R. D. T.*, Mch.); Tommy Totes a Gun (*A. A.*, Apr. 13); Captain Jim Confesses (*Clues*, First Apr. No.); Breezy Reasons It Out (*R. D. T.*, Apr.).
Torrey, Grace, Peter and Pan (*McCall*, Jan.).
Towers, Walter Kellogg, In Case of Fire (*A. A.*, Sept. 8).
Train, Arthur, Yaller Dog (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 9).
Trilling, Lionel, Notes on a Departure (*Men.*, May).

Trimble, Laurence, The Invisible Birth-Mark (*C.*, Mch.).
Tudury, Moran, Shiftless (*S. S.*, Nov. 10); Pardner (*Pop.*, First Feb. No.).
Turnbull, Agnes Sligh, The Best Things (*Am.*, May).
Turner, George Kibbe, The Cop Trap (*C. T.*, Apr. 26).
Tusting, Philip F., The Ivory Princess (*Y.*, Feb.).
Tuttle, Mabel Fowle, The Lad That Loved a Lady (*Hol.*, Nov.).
Tuttle, W. C., The Catspaw of Piperock (*Ad.*, Feb. 1); Bucking Buck Brady (*Ad.*, Feb. 15); "The Curse of Drink" (*S. S.*, Apr. 10); That Extra Point for Piperock (*Ad.*, June 1); The Proof (*Ad.*, July 1).
Ucker, William A., Destiny (*Mys.*, Jan.); Just One Little Thing (*D. F.*, May 18).
Ueland, Brenda, Even Barons Must Live (*D.*, Nov.).
Upson, William Hazlett, Big Business (*S. E. P.*, Oct. 13); Always Polite (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30); Gretchen (*S. E. P.*, May 25).
Vance, Donald Arthur, Like Anything but a Racehorse (*A. A.*, Apr. 20).
Van de Water, Frederic F., Mountain Storm (*Ev. and R.*, May).
Van de Water, Virginia Terhune, Twilight (*Y.*, Sept.).
Van Riper, Donald, Oh, for a Cruller! (*D. S. M.*, Oct. 20).
Victor, J., Fogbound (*Sea*, Feb.).
Volney, Dex, Guns in the Shadows (*S. S.*, Sept. 25).
Wallace, Francis, Alma Mayter (*R. B.*, Sept.).
Wallace, M. H., Flying Mists (*S. S.*, June 25).
Waltner, Ruland V. E., Gambler's Luck (*A. A.*, May 18).
Ward, Millard, Not Kneeling (*Ev.*, Jan.); Nine Winter, Three Fog (*Ev.*, Mch.).
Warde, Margaret, The Prowling Lady (*Y. C.*, July).
Warde, Shirley, A Limousine at the Door (*H. I. and C.*, Nov.); A Girl Who Played Fair (*H. I. and C.*, Feb.).
Ware, Edmund, The Stronger Voice (*Am.*, Oct.); On the Road to Jericho's (*Am.*, Jan.).
Ware, Edward Parrish, Nothing under His Hat (*D. F.*, Dec. 29); Bamboozle (*D. F.*, Mch. 16); The Green Mask (*D. F.*, Apr. 20); The Accidental Sheriff (*D. F.*, May 4); The Dead-Line at Silver Bald (*D. F.*, May 25).
Warren, Lella, Rich Girl, Poor Girl (*G. H.*, Apr.).
Waters, Don, When the Signals Changed (*S. S.*, Nov. 10); The Jitney (*A. A.*, Dec. 15); Human, All Too Human (*A. A.*, Feb. 16); A Fool for Luck (*A. A.*, Apr. 13).

Watkins, Mary F., The Secondary Rôle (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 6).
Watkins, Richard Howells, New Ships for Old (*S. S.*, June 10); Without a Clue (*S. S.*, July 10).
Waugh, Alec, The Secret Letter Box (*Smart Set*, Jan.); Exiled (*H. B.*, Feb.).
Way, Isabel Stewart, Mad Music (*W.*, Dec. 9); Color (*Y.*, Feb.).
Weaver, John V. A., And See the World (*C. H.*, Jan.).
Webb, John, Broken Bones (*S. S.*, May 25); Things Happen (*S. S.*, July 25).
Weber, Lenora Mattingly, Talking Turkey (*Mun.*, Nov.); Quiver-in' Time (*B. S.*, Feb.).
Weiman, Rita, Voltage (*L.*, May 4.)
Welch, Florence Dorsey, The Lumberman (*Mun.*, Feb.).
Wells, Hal K., The Brass Key (*W. T.*, Feb.).
Wertenbaker, Charles, The Twelfth Gentleman (*S. E. P.*, Dec. 15); The Revolt of Pinhead Prime (*C. H.*, July).
West, Dorothy, Prologue to a Life (*S. E. Q.*, Sec. Apr. No.).
West, Wallace, The Incubator Man (*W. T.*, Oct.).
Westman, Lolita Anne, One of Those Things (*Y.*, Oct.).
Weston, George, Juliet Was a Lady (*Col.*, Sept. 29); Fare Enough! (*Col.*, Nov. 3); The Clock that Laughed (*Col.*, May 25).
Wetjen, Albert Richard, The Sovereign of the Sea (*Col.*, Sept. 1); The Lucky Man (*Ad.*, Jan. 1); Good-bye, Sailor (*R.*, Mch.); The Education of Captain Sutherland (*Ad.*, Mch. 1); Checkmate (*Ad.*, July 15).
White, Ared, War Bars (*S. S.*, May 25).
White, Eleanor de Forest, A Foursome (*P. S. M.*, Oct.).
Whitehead, Henry S., The Cult of the Skull (*W. T.*, Dec.); The Return of Milt Drennan (*Mys.*, Jan.); The People of Pan (*W. T.*, Mch.).
Whitfield, Raoul F., El Jaguar's Claws (*Ev.*, Oct.); Life or Death (*Y. C.*, Oct.); Roaring Gold (*Ev.*, Dec.); Zooming into a Death Trap (*F. B. S.*, Dec.); Air Cooled (*B. B.*, Jan.); Sky Hawks (*B. S.*, Apr.); Modern Methods (*R.*, Apr.).
Whiting, J. M., Anne, Love, and an Old Lady (*Y.*, Nov.).
Whitman, Stephen F., Twilight of the Gods (*C. H.*, May).
Whitman, Vic, The Syncopated Mystery (*T.*, First Nov. No.).
Wilde, Hagar, Crossed Wires (*Smart Set*, Jan.); Pardon My Back (*Smart Set*, Feb.).
Wilde, Katharine, One Hard-Pressed Girl (*Y.*, Mch.).
Wilde, Percival, A Mountain of Millions (*McCall*, Apr.).

Wiley, Hugh, The Cow that Was Not a Lady (*McClure*, Sept.); Good Friend (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 5); Bad Actors (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 19;) Black Sand (*S. E. P.*, Mch. 30); The Rode Bird (*S. E. P.*, May 25).

Williams, Alan, The Kid's Clever (*Y.*, Dec.).

Williams, Ben Ames, Cinderella by Request (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 13); Eavesdrop (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 27).

Willson, Dixie, Two I Love (*Am.*, Nov.); From Here to Heaven (*D.*, Nov.).

Wilson, Forrest, The Eloquence of Papa Trentelivres (*H. I. and C.*, Dec.); That Affair in the Latin Quarter (*H. I. and C.*, June).

Wilson, Mary Badger, Jane Loses Her Umbrella (*Am.*, May); A Piece in the Paper (*C. H.*, June).

Wilson, Ruth and Alexander, Killers Have Blue Eyes (*D. F.*, Dec. 15).

Winchester, Robert, Bullets Are Obeyed (*R. B.*, Nov.); "You Talk to Her!" (*R. B.*, Mch.).

Winslow, Horatio, Antic Oats (*S. E. P.*, Jan. 12); Harmony (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 2); Sugar Baby; Full Particulars (*S. E. P.*, Feb. 16); Right Is Right (*S. E. P.*, Apr. 6); Leave It to Mil (*S. E. P.*, June 8); And It Was (*S. E. P.*, June 22).

Winslow, Thyra Samter, An Old-Fashioned Boy (*C. H.*, Feb.); A Long Way (*C. T.*, July 21).

Winter, Louise, The Visit Home (*Y.*, Oct.); The Other Side of the Door (*Y.*, Nov.).

Winthrow, Will Thomas, The Double Jinx (*A. A.*, Sept. 22).

Wire, H. C., Trapped (*S. S.*, Jan. 25); Born That Way (*S. S.*, June 25).

Wirt, W., "Take Him for a Ride" (*A. A.*, Sept. 8); Are You Afraid to Fly (*S. S.*, Nov. 25); His Pipe and His Tea (*D. F.*, Jan. 5); The Baron and I (*D. F.*, Jan. 26); No Gun Frolickin' (*S. S.*, July 25).

Witmer, Lee, The Hawk (*W.*, Mch. 10).

Witwer, H. C., Consider the Lily (*Col.*, May 11); Sax Appeal (*Col.* June 29).

Wolff, William Almon, The Real Facts (*B. S.*, July).

Wood, Quintan, Hermy Comes Back (*Hol.*, July).

Woodburn, Eve, A Lady of Leisure (*Y.*, Nov.).

Woodbury, Clarence, The Maxim Highball (*War*, Feb. 14).

Woodford, Jack, Out of the Sky (*A. A.*, Sept. 15).

Woolford, Cynthia, No Cheating! (*Y.*, Nov.).
Woolrich, Cornell, The Good Die Young (*C. L.*, Oct.); Bluebeard's 13th Wife (*C. H.*, Feb.)
Worst, George F., Pretty Soft (*McClure*, Feb.).
Wright, Robert Creighton, Enemies of the Air, But— (*F. S.*, Nov.).
Wright, Roscoe, Washwoman (*S. E. Q.*, Sec. Apr. No.).
Wright, Sewell Peaslee, Avengers in Red (*B. S.*, May).
Wylie, Philip, Worldly Riches (*Hol.*, May).
Wynn, Alice Gorton, Sardines (*C. W.*, July).
Yost, Edna, Soft for the Goose (*C.*, Jan.).
Zandtt, Culpeper, Mysteries of Today (*B. B.*, Apr.); Mysteries of Today (*B. B.*, June).
Ziemer, Gregor, Tropic Turf (*T.*, Sec. Feb. No.).

LIST IV

Of short short stories the following rank highest:

Anderson, Sherwood, The Lost Novel (*Scr.*, Sept.).
Barker, Elsa, Not Good Enough (*Col.*, Nov. 17).
Beames, John, The Smear (*T.*, Sec. Apr. No.).
Brush, Katharine, Him and Her (*Col.*, Mch. 16); Silk Hat (*Col.*, July 13).
Burlingame, Roger, Incident (*Scr.*, June).
Burnet, Dana, The Loud American (*Col.*, Feb. 23); After Three Years (*Col.*, Mch. 23).
Carroll, Richard, Week-End (*L.*, Mch. 23).
Clarke, Mabel McElliott, Cinderella de Luxe (*L.*, Sept. 8).
Cobb, Irvin S., At the Feet of the Enemy (*H. B.*, Feb.).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, One Crook Too Many (*D. F.*, Nov. 24).
Darrow, Clarence, The Black Sheep (*L.*, Nov. 3).
Davis, John P., The Overcoat (*Op.*, Dec.).
Ellerbe, Alma and Paul, Perfect Devotion (*W. H. C.*, July).
Elston, Allan Vaughan, The Fugitive (*Ad.*, June 15).
Flanagan, Hallie, Sasha Chooses a Gift (*F.*, June).
Flynn, T. T., A Loose End (*Mys.*, Oct.).
Ford, Corey, Tommy's Wife (*Scr.*, Jan.); Switchboard (*Col.*, Mch. 9); One on the House (*Col.*, June 15).
Gale, Zona, Tattie Marsh (*H. I. and C.*, Mch.).
Gallishaw, John, Gentleman Joe (*Col.*, Apr. 20).
Green, Walton, June 21 (*Col.*, June 22).
Gross, Milt, Our Economy Budget (*R. B.*, May).

Holt, George E., In the Basha's House (*Ad.*, June 1).
Irwin, Inez Haynes, Street Episode (*L.*, Apr. 20).
Kahler, Hugh MacNair, Last Laugh (*Col.*, Sept. 15); Rose Magic (*L. H. J.*, Oct.); Ingratitude (*L. H. J.*, Feb.); Bad News (*Col.*, Feb. 9).
Lee, Virginia B., There's Women in Portland (*Am. Merc.*, Feb.).
Lindley, Denver, The Butler's Night (*Col.*, June 29).
Marquand, J. P., The End of the Story (*Col.*, Apr. 6).
Merrill, Kenneth Griggs, Adeste, Fideles (*Scr.*, Dec.).
Munsterberg, Margaret, The Three Wishes (*Atl.*, Oct.).
Phelps, Carrington, Something on the Rent (*Col.*, July 6).
Pierce, Frank Richardson, The Winner (*Ad.*, Sept. 15); Neptune Speaks (*Ad.*, Sept. 1); Code (*S. S.*, Feb.).
Rammel, Hal, Conscience Drives (*Col.*, Oct. 27).
Rhymer, Paul, Hen (*C. H.*, Sept.).
Ritchie, Robert Welles, Kisses (*R. B.*, Sept.).
Sapin, Ruth, Subscription to the Symphony (*W. H. C.*, Oct.).
Singmaster, Elsie, The Day of Miracles (*Col.*, Sept. 22).
Skerry, Frederick, Carelessness (*Col.*, Oct. 13).
Smith, Maxwell, Short (*Col.*, Jan. 5).
Spears, Raymond S., Recluses (*A. A.*, Sept. 29); A Lazy Man's Poison (*Ad.*, Oct. 1).
Springer, Fleta Campbell, Make a Note of This (*P. R.*, Oct.).
Thompson, John H., Caught! (*A. A.*, Feb. 9).
Thomson, Thomas Barclay, A Good Judge of Men (*A. A.*, Feb. 23).
Tipton, Stanley, Somebody's Manna (*Col.*, May 11); Just a Little Careless (*Col.*, May 25).
Tomlinson, Ned, Genius Wins (*Col.*, Dec. 22).
Van De Verg, Louise, The Three (*W. T.*, Feb.).
Watkins, Maurine, The Change (*H. I. and C.*, Sept.).
Weber, William C., A Good Husband Remembers (*Scr.*, Mch.).
Worts, George F., The Hammer (*Col.*, Sept. 8); Class (*Col.*, Nov. 10).
Young, James N., The Wrong House (*Col.*, May 4).

Of the short short stories the following rank second:

Barr, Mark, A Sporting Chance (*Col.*, Apr. 13).
Borland, Hal, Marguerita (*R.*, Feb.).
Bromley, Al, Back of the North Wind (*W. S.*, Oct. 20).
Brown, Bernice, Illegal Entry (*Col.*, Mch.2).

Brown, Guthrie, Ten Days to Go (*Ad.*, Sept. 15).
Buckley, F. R., The Buzz-Saw (*Col.*, Feb. 2); Once Shy (*Col.*, June 1).
Cohen, Octavus Roy, Man-Eater (*Col.*, Sept. 1); The New Deal (*Col.*, Oct. 13).
Davis, Bob, The Boy Who Resigned at Sunset and Returned at Midnight (*A. A.*, Sept. 22).
Davis, Godfrey, Red Aces (*Ac.*, Jan.).
De Bra, Lemuel, Blue Eyes and Diamonds (*A. A.*, Mch. 9.)
Dodge, Murray, Dollars and Dark People (*W.*, Jan. 27).
Ellerbe, Alma and Paul, The Shakedown (*Smart Set*, Mch.).
Farrow, Fred R., The Bed of Shadows (*W. T.*, May).
Fess, Leroy Ernest, The Dream Chair (*W. T.*, Oct.).
Fitzgerald, F. Scott, Outside the Cabinet-Maker's (*C.*, Dec.).
Flynn, T. T., Without Price (*Mys.*, Sept.).
Gale, Zona, "Something Beautiful" (*Col.*, Feb. 16).
Gordon, Edythe Mae, If Wishes Were Horses (*S. E. Q.*, Sec. Apr. No.
Hare, Amory, Poor Devil (*H. B.*, Mch.).
Hatch, Eric, Nickelodeon (*Col.*, May 18).
Janis, Elsie, "Very Good, Madam" (*R. B.*, Mch.).
Keith, Richard, The Crucifix (*D. F.*, Oct. 20).
Keller, David H., The Jelly-Fish (*W. T.*, Jan.).
Kerr, Geoffrey, Six Dinner Parties (*H. B.*, Dec.).
Kirby, John, Man Hunt (*T.*, First Mch. No.).
Lardner, Ring W., Stop Me—If You've Heard This One (*H. I. and C.*, July).
Lindley, Denver, Sold! (*Col.*, Dec. 1).
McCully, Anderson, The Rajah's Bracelet (*B. M.*, Jan.).
McNutt, William Slavens, "Difference" (*L.*, Dec. 1).
Matthews, Wilton, Knaves Three (*T.*, Sec. Mch. No.).
Merwin, Samuel, West Is East (*C.*, Dec.).
Perry, Ralph R., A Permanent Improvement (*S. S.*, June 10).
Phelps, Carrington, For Observation and Treatment (*Col.*, Oct. 20).
Rentfrow, Frank Hunt, Cyrene (*War*, Jan. 31).
Roberts, Elvira Pennell, Prairie Neighbors (*Ev.*, Nov.).
Scott, Winifred Boody, The Return (*C. W.*, Dec.).
Skerry, Frederick, Silver Lining (*Col.*, June 8).
Spears, Raymond S., Gunstore Wise Ones (*Ad.*, Feb. 15).
Springs, Elliott White, The Rubaiyat of an Address Book (*L.*, Oct. 20).

Strakosch, Avery, A Pearl to Pawn (*C.*, May).
Struckman, Robert Tod, Good Shepherd (*Fr.*, Mch.).
Sutton, Anne, Socrates, Paranhi, and Quinces (*C. W.*, Feb.).
Sweet, Fred, "In Loving Memory" (*Col.*, Dec. 15).
Thompson, John A., Sold—One Diamond (*A. A.*, June 1).
Thompson, Thomas Barclay, Back to Civilization (*A. A.*, May 25).
Titus, Harold, The Boomerang (*Col.*, Mch. 16).
Ucker, William A., Destiny (*Mys.*, Jan.).
Ueland, Brenda, Even Barons Must Live (*D.*, Nov.).
Vance, John Frazier, Business Trip (*H.*, Jan.).
Watkins, Maurine, Luncheon for Two (*H. I. and C.*, Dec.).
Watson, Robert, The Ghost of Mad Laveen (*W. T.*, Jan.).
Weeks, Lew, A Lesson in Journalism (*A. A.*, June 22).
Williams, Frank H., What Was in the Black Bag? (*T.*, First Feb. No.).

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